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THE LAST SPANISH WAR

Revelations in "Diplomacy"

THE LAST SPANISH WAR

Revelations in "Diplomacy"

by

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TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH BY

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THE LAST SPANISH WAR
Revelations in "Diplomacy"

FOREWORD

SOME years ago I read in a book by William T. Stead, British author and journalist, that in 1898, at a meeting with the Austrian Ambassador to Rome, he was shocked by the bitterness of feeling towards the United States shown by that highly able diplomat, who normally was an even-tempered, discreet person, with his emotions completely under control. The Ambassador's wrath, Mr. Stead related, did not stop with the United States; he was furiously angry at England also. And the reason why this representative of the most aristocratic of nations lost his serenity, when speaking of the United States and England, was that the United States had been permitted by Europe to aid the people of Cuba in their war for independence from Spain.

I had had, before reading Mr. Stead's book, some familiarity with European politics of the last years of the nineteenth century, and it seemed to me that the Austrian diplomat's anger might be attributable not to a personal cause but to the thwarting of some project of his chancellery. Thereupon the suspicion entered my mind that Austria might not have been a mere disinterested spectator of the dispute between Spain and the United States which culminated in the war of 1898. A career diplomat, accustomed from early manhood to devote himself with all his being to advancing the interests of his country, to act a hundred times in ways contrary to his convictions, and to exercise his own initiative only to the extent of choosing the methods for carrying out the plans of his superiors—such a man does not give way to anger, at least not openly, because of purely personal opinions that he holds.

Being curious about what I inferred had happened behind the scenes in Europe during the years preceding the war of 1898, and because I was interested in the

general political and diplomatic history of those years—I had been a participant in the Cuban War for Independence—I began an investigation which kept me intermittently occupied for thirty years. As the result, I have arrived at certain conclusions which I believe are definitive. These I present in this volume, together with a narration which I believe to be exhaustive of all the attempts made by Europe to stay the hand of the United States from giving aid to Cuba in her struggle with Spain.

Not much about this subject has appeared in print.

Besides the book by William Stead describing the episode of the Austrian diplomat, I have found allusions to it in only a few other publications, among them the volumes of official German documents published by the German Republic during its early years, and a book, "Adventures in American Diplomacy," by an American writer, Mr. Alfred L. P. Dennis. Besides these, in a more technical field of study, Professor Lester Burrell Shippee published in the *American Review* of 1925 an article under the title of "Germany and the Spanish American War," in which he commented on the attitude of Germany; and in 1928 Professor J. Fred Rippey published a valuable book, "Latin America in World Politics," in which he gave a whole chapter to the analysis of the attitude of the European Powers to the Spanish-American War.

At the start of my investigation, the difficulties in the way of acquiring knowledge of the facts were such that I made almost no progress. Later through perseverance and good luck, I was able to get information about documents in the official French and Italian archives and about the much more important ones in the archives of Spain and the United States. The French and Italian documents were not made available to my perusal, but through the kindness of the ministers of state of the two countries, I obtained lengthy briefs of them. Of the American and Spanish documents I was permitted to make complete copies. The German documents to which I have referred were published almost in their entirety, in a collection that is very useful to the student of political history of the latter part of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. I sought to obtain

copies of the Russian documents and I was promised them by the present custodians of the Imperial Russian archives, but at the last moment the offer was withdrawn and I was given merely a list of the papers having to do with the subject of my study. The data this list contained proved to be very useful, almost as much so as seeing the documents would have been, because by knowing the dates of the documents and the persons to whom they were addressed, I was able to corroborate facts obtained elsewhere. The Soviet Government withdrew its offer, and at the same time returned the fee I had paid to have the documents photographed, with the explanation that the Soviet itself was planning to publish them.

Up to the present no person besides myself has learned what is contained in the documents in the Spanish, American, French, and Italian archives. Several of the confidential American documents have been seen by Mr. Dennis, but the others, dealt with in this volume, I can say with confidence have never before been studied in their entirety by anyone.

Because in this volume I picture the effort made by Europe in the 1890's to revive in a new form the Holy Alliance of the early nineteenth century, and because I show how unchallenged was the assumption that the interests of Europe and America were opposed, a condition believed to inhere in national and international politics of the time, I am hopeful that this work may find a welcome among persons interested in world politics and history. Such persons will find interest in the spectacle I present of the European chancelleries in action, each motivated by the viewpoints of the period—a Europe timid, alert, foresighted, playing with world interests as if they were pieces on a chess board. Also I feel that they will find interest in my evocation of an era of international politics on the grand scale, a time when the methods of Talleyrand and Metternich had flowered in all their splendor and in all their vigorous maturity, when every diplomatic action was like the studied movements of a tragedian who destroys one harmony but to create another and a more beautiful one, a period of diplomatic "virtuosity," when every actor on the stage gave of himself without stint, gave everything he had of

training and experience and intellect. (But if the methods were beautifully classic, it cannot be said that they were highly ethical; Mussolini, who in diplomacy can hardly be accounted an idealist, has said, not without reason, that "the unscrupulousness of the European governments before the War was a disgrace to mankind."¹)

Those who acted during these times that I evoke expected that silence would cloak their deeds; consequently, they acted their natural selves.² They revealed the characteristics of their races. The Englishman within the broad outlines of well-defined policies, practiced "watchful waiting"; opportunistic in matters of detail, on important points he adhered firmly to principle. The German, systematic and extraordinarily logical, examined at the beginning all the ways open to him and thereafter, regardless of what happened, never modified in any detail the course he had decided upon. The Frenchman, easy and flexible so long as the aspirations of others did not conflict with his own, revealed himself disposed to serve others provided that at the same time he served himself, but recalcitrant, stubborn, even violent when his interests were put in jeopardy. The Italian, preoccupied exclusively with affirming his international personality and in bettering his status before the world, was instinctively juridical—he corrected the technical slips which others made and at times acted just for the sake of acting, with no particular purpose in mind. The Spaniard, cleaving to abstract principles, having no sense of the practical, severe and refractory, his mind dedicated exclusively to the understanding of moral principles; for him law and politics were of subordinate order. The North American, brilliant at times, audacious as befits the agent of a democracy, a stranger to the beaten paths of international politics, easily vanquished in routine matters but capable of smashing all the rules of form and convention and winning success in a day, almost vio-

¹ "Talks with Mussolini," Emil Ludwig. Little Brown & Co., Boston. 1933. P. 78.

² Reading Francisco Nitti's "Democracy," after the proofs of this volume had come to me from the publisher, I came across this passage: "In the Ministries of Foreign Affairs secrecy is regarded as an institution and the so-called diplomatic secret is a tradition; intrigue can never be unilateral." Spanish Edition. M. Aguilar, Madrid. Vol. II; p. 246.

lent when confronted with an obstacle which the skill of others had put in his way.

If on other occasions when I have discussed historical subjects, I had not set for myself the rule of being always objective, and if I had not criticized Ferrero and Ludwig—I apologize to Professor Guglielmo Ferrero for comparing him as a historian to Ludwig who, on the other hand, is a great genius of literature and a profound psychologist—if I had not criticized others who have sought to dramatize History, covering its scientific nudity with the sumptuous raiment of Art, I, too, in this volume might have indulged in imaginative flights, perhaps without damage to the truth. But I have believed it better that I continue to be objective and treat only the subjects dealt with in the documents I have studied, leaving to readers the drawing of inferences.

Mussolini, as I have remarked, has said that "the unscrupulousness of the European governments before the War was a disgrace to mankind." It is my belief that every period has the politics that is appropriate to it. The years dealt with in this survey, falling between an era of absolutism in international affairs and the coming of democratic methods, are perhaps less than admirable, despite the beautifully perfect functioning of the projects of the chancelleries. Internal changes in a state have effects on its international politics, but because of the traditionalistic character of a nation's relations with other countries, the effects manifest themselves tardily. In 1896, the principle of governments responsible to parliaments had made great strides so far as internal affairs are concerned—in domestic matters no one challenged the authority of ministers having a franchise from parliaments. But in foreign relations, control by parliament was secondary to control by the sovereign. Ministers of foreign affairs formulated their plans and policies, and the crowned heads formulated theirs. The past resisted tenaciously the momentum of popular will.

In this volume it will be shown that the foreign policies of the monarchs and the ministers went along independently of each other and that occasionally they collided. The ministers of foreign affairs in England, as in Germany and other countries, not only had to seek

the course most beneficial to their nation, but they had also to restrain their sovereign from making unwise or ill-considered moves.

In these pages is pictured the skilful maneuvering of the diplomat of the 1890's when forced to change the position he had taken with respect to some course. An ambassador has, let us say, committed himself with respect to some course, has given opinions and advice, has suggested strategic steps. Suddenly his superiors in the foreign office reverse their attitude. He reverses his, too, between dusk and dawn, without a word of explanation or apology; often, on the contrary, he accuses the government with which he has been treating of carrying things to extremes. To cite another type of case: a minister of foreign affairs, after assuming responsibilities in connection with some project, is forced because of untoward developments or for some other reason to beat a retreat. Thereupon he forgets everything that has taken place and, if reminded by the ambassador with whom he has been on intimate and confidential terms of earlier conversations and understandings, he sits mute. Finally, there is the dual politics sometimes played by a foreign office, with the chancellery, so to speak, working one side of the street and its envoy abroad working the other. On such occasions, at home all is rigid, difficult; abroad everything seems facile, possible, even probable.

All this suavity of form, ductility of technique, though of dubious morality, is consecrated in the conventionalism of diplomacy, its defense mechanism against never-ending quarrels.

Europe for centuries has diverted itself with these diplomatic comedies and dramas. During the early years of the nineteenth century, the great protagonists were Talleyrand and Metternich, followed, later, by Bismarck, Salisbury, Delcassé, and Bulow. The time when the dramas were enacted and the great actors in them had their hour on the stage was one of closely guarded secrecy, and it was not permitted to any of the principals to pass judgment on the others—to have done so would have constituted a *casus belli*. Morality, whether individual and collective, can exist and thrive only in the open. "Adulteries," says Nitti, sarcastically, "are perpetrated

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in secret, and there is no illicit relation that does not require secrecy." The ministers of foreign affairs of the 1890's, in the guarded secrecy of their offices, devoted themselves to the interests of their nations and to the development of their plans, free of all inhibitions, secure in the knowledge that at no time would their intrigues be revealed.

With this book I place before the reader a series of European diplomatic dramas of the latter part of the nineteenth century, which should be of aid to the understanding of history, and should also, because the events dealt with are still recent, be of value to the understanding of politics.

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In conclusion, I desire to express my thanks for assistance generously given me by two former Ministers of State of Spain, Santiago Alba and Alejandro Lerroux, to Sr. Chacon y Calvo, and to Mr. David Hunter Miller, former custodian of the State Department archives at Washington, to Count Vitetti of the Italian diplomatic service, to Sr. Ramiro Hernandez Portela, and to many others. Without their aid, it would not have been possible for me to illuminate this obscure corner of history.

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CHAPTER I

PREPARING THE "MEMORANDUM" OF 1896

THE Prime Minister of Spain in 1896 was don Antonio Cánovas del Castillo. Scholarly, forceful, Cánovas enjoyed a prestige not rivaled by any other public man of his country. He it was who had restored the Bourbons to the Spanish throne, besting the determined and often unscrupulous efforts of army generals in behalf of other pretenders. His making Alfonso XII (son of Isabel II) King, had put an end to the chaotic and inefficient regime of the Republic,¹ and now at long last Spain found herself under the rule of a wise and strong leader from civilian life. Government by military *pronunciamento* was come to an end and many years were to pass before a general should again achieve power.

Cánovas' Minister of Foreign Affairs (also of State) was Carlos O'Donnell y Abreu, Duke de Tetuán, scion of an Irish family long resident in Spain. During the antecedent period (when sedition by the military was frequent) an uncle of O'Donnell's had been a famous general and had played an important part in the political changes through which the country had passed.

In 1896, the Cuban war for independence had reached its apogee. Failure of the moderate and conciliatory General Martinez Campos to subdue the rebellion, had resulted in his recall, and his replacement by the energetic and brutally ruthless Valeriano Weyler; and at the same time Spain had made large additions to her armies in Cuba. Weyler's cruelty had failed of its intended effect of intimidating the Cubans—indeed, it seemed but to inspire them to more heroic resistance. Thereupon,

¹ "Modern Spain," H. Butler Clark. Cambridge University Press. 1896. Pages 340-41.

to the shocked dismay of the world, the struggle took on a character bordering on savagery.

In the United States, sympathy was strongly on the side of the Cubans. The benevolence with which Americans in the mass regarded Cuba, combined with other considerations—large investments by American citizens in Cuba, a zeal to promote the cause of "America for Americans," the wish to see democratic principles triumph over the colonial system (traditionally repugnant to Americans)—for these reasons the people of the United States felt that they were justified, on grounds of idealism as well as material interest, in taking a hand in shaping Cuba's destiny. A majority of the American people, and also of Congress (especially the Lower House) were strongly in favor of putting an end to Spain's rule in America. However, President Cleveland and his Administration maintained a prudent policy of not disturbing the *status quo*.

The substantial fact about the Cuban revolution, which had begun in February 1895, was that it had made steady progress for a year, and as a consequence Cuba's position before the world had been enormously strengthened. This development President Cleveland took fully into account, and the policy he followed during his final months in office, of exerting pressure on Spain to moderate its attitude towards Cuba, was inspired by sincere friendliness towards Spain. But Spain showed herself indifferent to the President's friendliness, and disdainful of his well-meant advice, and as a result there arose the controversy which was to end in the Spanish-American War of 1898.

President Cleveland's Secretary of State was Richard Olney, a statesman endowed with an ample understanding of Latin America, who a few years earlier had directed Thomas F. Bayard, American Ambassador to London, in his negotiations with the British in the dispute over the boundaries of Venezuela. Beginning early in 1896, Olney urged Spain, through the Spanish Minister at Washington, Señor Dupuy de Lome, to reform its administration of Cuba. On March 20, following a conversation between the two, de Lome cabled his home government that Olney had said to him "that reports

from Cuba are to the effect that it will be impossible for Spain to win, short of a protracted struggle, and that it is unlikely that the rebellion will in the future attain a degree of effectiveness greater than it now has; for which reason it appears that Cuba is threatened with complete ruin, to the great loss of many Americans having interests in the Island; that he wished to help Spain bring peace to Cuba; that he would oppose any step which might be considered as unfriendly to our [Spain's] sovereignty . . . but that he was sure that if Spain would put into effect reforms of a sort which the American public should regard as adequate, and which should evoke a declaration to this effect by this [the American] Government—in that case the insurrection would be shorn of the moral support it now has in this country, and the task of suppressing it would be made easier, because public opinion in the United States would be arrayed against it, and would force the abandonment of arms by the Cubans, or facilitate their complete rout.”²

To Olney's friendly counsel the Spanish Government paid no heed. Instead of reforming the administration of its sole remaining American colony, it took the course of greatly augmenting its military forces on the Island, in preparation for a powerful offensive. Cánovas, whose power at this time was unchallenged, had gone into a state of exaltation over his own widely quoted phrase, that he would fight in Cuba until the last man and the last dollar—a sentiment, it should be said, shared by the majority of Spain's public men, and echoed by the leader of the opposition, Don Práxedes Mateo Sagasta.

Olney, seeing that his suggestion to de Lome was apparently to be ignored by Madrid, put his appeal on, April 4, into the more formal shape of a note.

This note marked the first step towards intervention by the United States Government in the Cuban question. In spirit, the note was entirely friendly. After describing conditions in Cuba, reviewing the military situation, and pointing out the dangers which were everywhere threatening, it ended with a precise and carefully phrased statement of the aims of the Washington Government, and

² Spanish Archives. 1896. Docket 35.

an offer of that Government's good offices in mediating between colony and mother country. It read, in part:

"On all these grounds and in all these ways the interest of the United States in the existing situation in Cuba yields in extent only to that of Spain herself, and has led many good and honest persons to insist that intervention to terminate the conflict is the immediate and imperative duty of the United States. It is not proposed to now consider whether existing conditions would justify such intervention at the present time, or how much longer those conditions should be endured before such intervention would be justified. That the United States can not contemplate with complacency another ten years of Cuban insurrection,³ with all its injurious and distressing incidents, may certainly be taken for granted. The object of the present communication, however, is not to discuss intervention, nor to propose intervention, nor to pave the way for intervention. The purpose is exactly the reverse—to suggest whether a solution of present troubles can not be found, which will prevent all thought of intervention by rendering it unnecessary. What the United States desires to do, if the way can be pointed out, is to cooperate with Spain in the immediate pacification of the island on such a plan as, leaving Spain her rights of sovereignty, shall yet secure to the people of the island all such rights and powers of local self-government as they can reasonably ask. To that end, the United States offers and will use her good offices at such time and in such manner as may be deemed most advisable. Its mediation, it is believed, should not be rejected in any quarter, since none could misconceive or mistrust its purpose. Spain could not, because our respect for her sovereignty and our determination to do nothing to impair it have been maintained for many years at great cost and in spite of many temptations. The insurgents could not, because anything assented to by this Government which did not satisfy the reasonable demands and aspirations of Cuba would arouse the indignation of our whole people."⁴

The Spanish Government, rightly regarding the note as a first step in intervention, was perturbed, and felt

³ This reference is to an earlier war, carried on by Cubans against Spain, which lasted for the ten years between 1868 and 1878.

⁴ This version is taken verbatim from "Spanish Diplomatic Correspondence and Documents, 1896-1900, presented to the Cortes by the Minister of State." Washington. Government Printing Office. 1905. P. 7.

that something must be done to nullify the effects of the action. For this purpose recourse was had to an adroit stratagem. The Cortes, which was shortly to convene, would be opened by a Speech by the Crown. Into this Speech, the Cabinet put an offer of certain reforms in Cuba, which would be instituted *after the insurrection had been suppressed*. On May 22, after the Speech had been made, the Spanish Department of State sent to Minister Dupuy de Lome in Washington for transmission to the American State Department, a note saying that the reason why an earlier reply had not been made to Olney, was that the Spanish Government wished the Government of the United States to learn its intentions from the Speech by the Crown, in which was set forth Spain's "prior and voluntary" determination to follow the course which Olney had suggested. The Spanish note, in effect, accepted the friendly overtures contained in the American note, but rejected the offer of mediation. The note reads, in part: *

"In view of the commitments thus undertaken [that is, the reforms offered in the Speech by the Crown] I am confident that the Government of the United States will understand that, although Spain is highly appreciative of its friendly counsels, she must point out that for some time she has, voluntarily and on her own initiative, been giving consideration to the policy suggested; consequently, it is natural that she should give practical concurrence in the recommendations insofar as circumstances should make them viable. Further, Mr. Olney has by this time seen in the official gazette [Madrid] that the insurrectionists, exalted by the power they have acquired thanks to a certain group of citizens of the United States, reject with disdain through their agents in the United States, every suggestion of intervention in their struggle by the United States, whether by counsel or in any other way, on the ground that the representations of disinterestedness made by that Government are specious, and that the purpose behind them is the absorption of the island by the United States in the future. It will thus be seen that no result could come of such hypothetical mediation, rejected as it already has been by the Cubans, even though the Spanish Government should treat with its rebellious subjects as one nation with another, an action which would demean

* Spanish Archives.

Spain's dignity as a nation, jeopardize her authority in the future, and compromise the independence of which at all times she has shown herself a zealous defender. In short, any attempt to bring about the pacification of Cuba short of submission by the rebels in arms to the authority of the mother country would be futile."

The American Government, feeling that further insistence would be vain, decided wisely to leave the impasse to such vicissitudes as time and events might work upon it.

In Spain the import of the action taken by Olney was not under-appraised; apprehension became widespread that, when President Cleveland should leave office the following year, his successor, whoever he might be, and whatever his political affiliations, would follow a course leading ultimately to intervention.

Faced with a prospect so little to their liking, the Spanish Cabinet set their minds to work to find a way out of the predicament they saw in store for them, namely, the loss of Cuba, which would inevitably follow intervention by the United States. A plan was finally evolved, and O'Donnell, acting with and under the direction of Cánovas del Castillo, lost no time in putting it into effect. O'Donnell's scheme was both audacious and brilliant. It amounted, in effect, to preventing one intervention by the threat of another. If the United States should go to the extreme of making the Spanish-Cuban quarrel an American question by intervening in it, Spain would widen the matter still further by making it a Spanish-Cuban-American-European question, by bringing about intervention in it by the great powers of Europe.

Back of O'Donnell's reasoning was the thought that since no one could wish the dispute to spread so widely, the mere possibility of the involvement of Europe in it, would act as a deterrent to the interventionist sentiment in the United States.

With the details of this grandiose plot, O'Donnell busied himself during the months of June and July, 1896.

At this point it is opportune to turn for a moment to the so-called "Concert of Europe," composed of the six great powers, which, through a quite extraordinary bal-

ancing of forces, were, during the nineties, all-powerful—the most amazing phenomenon of political acrobatics in all history.

Spain's international policy at this time was one of complete isolation. The Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy) and the Dual Alliance (France and Russia) each wished Spain to throw in her lot with them. But Cánovas' Conservative government opposed any leaning towards one group or the other. The Spanish monarchy was sympathetic to the Central Powers; throughout his life Alfonso XII had been partial to Germany. But Cánovas wisely decided that Spain could gain nothing by joining either group. In 1887, Minister of Foreign Affairs Don Segismundo Moret had entered into a compact of a sort with Italy (and through Italy with the Central Powers), with results which, to say the least, had been disappointing. Moret himself afterwards repented of his action, and, in 1892, Cánovas withdrew from the treaty, and recovered for Spain complete liberty of action.⁶

Spain's being free of entanglements, and her friendship being desired by both groups of powers, made it possible that use be made of her isolation to unite the powers of the two alliances for the purpose of forcing the American Government to adopt more vigorous measures against those of its citizens, and also foreigners in the United States, who were giving aid to Cuba. This was the aim of O'Donnell's scheme in its first stage; once the scheme was launched its objective would be broadened—Spain would see to that.

The results of exploratory probings by the Duke de Tetuán were more than encouraging. The group of ambassadors at Madrid, despite the conflict of interests which separated the Triple Alliance from the Dual Alliance, were disposed in principle to cooperate; and such differences of opinion as existed among them were not very serious: one group held that it would be well to

⁶ "Cánovas," Marques de Lema. Espasa-Calpe, S. A. Madrid. 1931. P. 227. An opinion differing from the above appears in the "Memorias" of Leon y Castillo.

keep the project within the boundaries of the general; the other that it would be better to decide at once as to the scope and character of the action to be taken.

Encouraged, O'Donnell prepared a note embodying his plan for transmittal to the powers, but before sending it off, showed it to the foreign envoys at Madrid. In confidential chats that the ambassadors had among themselves, some argued that the extreme vagueness and cautiousness of the note made it ineffective. Others, because of these very qualities, approved it; the United States could not possibly take offense at it.

As for the carrying out of the project, O'Donnell believed that it should be begun confidentially by Spain. Thereafter, as he explained in a circular to the Spanish Ambassadors at Paris, Berlin, Vienna, London, Rome, and St. Petersburg:

I feel strongly that one of the Great Powers should take charge of shaping the opinion of the others to a favorable view of the project and of getting the others into agreement. Because of conditions in Europe, it seems to me that no government is so favorably circumstanced for this task as St. Petersburg. In this view, I am supported by all the ambassadors here with whom I have spoken, including the Russian Ambassador himself—though I should add, in qualification, that in my talks with the latter I have considered it the better part of prudence not to touch on this point specifically, although I have spoken with him, as with all the others, about the project itself.⁷

During this early period, the ambassadors at Madrid kept their governments informed, as was to be expected, with respect to O'Donnell's plan. Thus when, later, the Spanish Ambassadors at the great capitals of Europe discussed the project directly with the ministers of Foreign Relations of the Great Powers, they found them fully informed.

In the conversations at Madrid, it appears that the English Ambassador, Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, was, in the beginning, among those who showed most zeal for the enterprise, from which O'Donnell drew assurance that Wolff's Government would view the project with

⁷ Spanish Archives. Docket 35.

friendly eyes. His confidence was such that he gave little attention to the somewhat pessimistic tone of letters he received from the Spanish Ambassador at London, the Count de Casa Valencia.

Sir Henry Drummond Wolff was a diplomat in whom the Chancellery of St. James could take justified pride. A man of refinement, good presence, very astute, a famed raconteur—he had served his government on many confidential missions, for the most part in the Mediterranean and neighboring regions. The ambassadorship at Madrid had been given him as a merited reward for a long career, in which success had been in proportion to the confidence placed in him.

O'Donnell, on despatching to the Spanish Ambassadors at the capitals of the Great Powers of Europe the document—he gave it the name "Memorandum"—which previously he had shown to the foreign envoys at Madrid, sent with it, as was the custom, a Royal Order, a personal letter, and still another letter containing final instructions for each individual ambassador.

The letter to the Count de Casa Valencia in London brings to light a contradiction between the attitude of Lord Salisbury in London, and that of Drummond Wolff in Madrid:

To what I say in the Memorandum and in the personal letter which I am sending you herewith, there remains only to add, very confidentially, that Drummond Wolff has kept Lord Salisbury fully informed, and that Salisbury has agreed that leadership in the carrying on of the negotiations should be entrusted to Russia, for which reason I doubt if you will have any difficulty with Salisbury on this point. Nevertheless, it is greatly to be desired that you get his promise to use his influence to this end at St. Petersburg, where we also will exert pressure, directly and indirectly, in every way we can.

I say to you in the strictest confidence, and for the purpose only of guiding you—begging, at the same time, that you dissimulate your knowledge of what I am about to tell you—that Salisbury has sent me, through Wolff, a verbal message, or rather a written message which Wolff brought with him from London and read to me, to the effect that although, because of the special circumstances in which the English Government finds itself in its relations with the United

States, it is not possible for him to offer to take the initiative, he will nevertheless give us effective help if some other European Power will take the lead. This satisfactory declaration Wolff has made to me repeatedly, and I can tell you that he has not been hindmost among the envoys here, who have worked to get their colleagues to collaborate in this enterprise of ours.

In the light of Wolff's actions I am unable to understand the reserve which you say in your recent despatches that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs [Salisbury] has shown in his conversations with you; nor can I understand why he should speak as he did to the Austrian and French Ambassadors, as described in your letter. It may be that he took this course in order to avoid committing himself in advance with those governments, before he had studied the Memorandum, and before you, acting officially as my representative, had talked with him.

However, this contradiction can be left for time and your efforts at London to clarify.⁸

This contradiction should have had O'Donnell's most careful consideration right at the beginning. O'Donnell could not ask or expect that Salisbury should formally commit himself. But in some way, at the outset, the precise intentions of the English Government should have been learned. Often an ambassador, to avoid his being left isolated, is given authorization to make a show of friendly cooperation in a collective undertaking; but authorizations of this character are given freely in connection with projects which in the opinion of the chancelleries concerned are destined for only negative results.

But O'Donnell had great faith in his plan, and, warmed by the smiling encouragement given him by the ambassadors of the Great Powers, he saw all difficulties as of easy solution. In his mind, the European *bloc* was, in its essentials, already formed, and all that remained to be done was to decide on the *modus operandi* for getting the project adopted.

O'Donnell, seeking in his letters to the Spanish Ambassadors to imbue them with his own ebullient optimism, conjured all difficulties out of existence. And in so doing he fell into the most grievous error a diplomat can commit. For anyone who must take an active part in

⁸ Spanish Archives. Docket 35. 1896. No. 17.

a plan, to engage in wishful thinking is to invite failure; for a diplomat to do so, is to court, not failure, but ruin. A diplomat must think realistically. His plans must be made with the most meticulous care. Before initiating an action, he must foresee and evaluate every link in the chain of events lying ahead. It is as true of diplomacy as of all else, that the only road to success is, first, to know the truth, and second, to confess the truth to one's self. Not only that: one must also be as free of enervating pessimism, as of the optimism which all too often leads but to disenchantment. And finally, as Bismarck once so pointedly remarked, one must exorcise fear, whether of responsibility or of consequences.

The Duke de Tetuán, though a statesman of intelligence and skill, permitted himself to forget, in addressing himself to Spain's ambassadors at the European capitals, that he was the head of the Spanish chancellery, and that his first duty, more compelling even than that of inspiring enthusiasm among his coadjutors for the project he had under way, was to imbue them with confidence and trust in himself. Instead, in his intercourse with them, he played the role of exhorter and evangelist, and that was a serious mistake.

Consider, for example, the letter he wrote to the Marquis de Hoyos, Ambassador to Vienna. He was convinced, he informed Hoyos, that Count Goluchowski, Austrian Foreign Minister, favored Spain's cause, because, in the early stage of the Memorandum the Austrian Ambassador, Dubsky, had shown enthusiasm, and had aided actively in the quiet sounding out of the other ambassadors to Madrid. O'Donnell argued that he would not have acted thus unless he had been instructed to do so by Goluchowski. Nevertheless, he intimated to Hoyos that it would be well for him to court Goluchowski, by playing upon his vanity, in order to get him to urge Russia to accept leadership of the project to form a European *bloc*. The cozening of Goluchowski, he went on, was all the more imperative, because, in case Russia should balk at accepting the role that had been assigned her, Austria could fill in as a substitute; due to the family bond uniting the Emperor of the Dual Monarchy and the Queen Regent, no nation in Europe could con-

sider itself a greater friend of Spain than Austria, and of none could Spain ask more.⁹

Count Goluchowski was a gentleman of distinguished lineage, amiable, prudent, an adornment to any drawing room. But it was the general opinion of his time that his talents as a statesman fell short, in some respects, of the requirements of the high office he occupied.¹⁰

In his instructions to the Count de Villagonzalo, Spanish Ambassador at St. Petersburg, the Duke de Tetuán continued the note of light-hearted optimism. Russia, he wrote, must be made to take the initiative in the proposed effort. That would be Villagonzalo's task, and he must carry it out in such a way that Russia should not suspect the importance and significance of the coalition she was to organize:

"I foresee no difficulty in getting the great powers to agree that our Memorandum is timely, and that the logic of its reasoning is sound; and the same may be said as respects the point that all circumstances point to Russia as the country best suited to leadership in the negotiations with the great powers, in bringing them into agreement. Russia least, of all the great powers, inspires feelings of jealousy and rivalry, and besides Russia is considered, with abundant reason, the friend of monarchies—she has given many proofs of this to Spain—and the monarchical principle is an important factor in the question about Cuba. Finally, the friendly relations Russia maintains with the United States, and the consideration with which the United States always treats Russia, are a major guarantee that, with Russia taking the initiative, results favorable to Europe and ourselves will be achieved."¹¹

The only difficulty the Duke de Tetuán foresaw, and that a minor one, was to get Russia to take the initiative. He intimated, however, that the Count de Villagonzalo's *savoir faire*, his patriotism, and the enviable status he had at the Czar's court, inspired in him complete faith that the Ambassador would find a way to the solution of

⁹ Spanish Archives. Docket 35. 1896. No. 19.

¹⁰ In "Creators of Modern Europe," Count Sforza expresses a contrary opinion.

¹¹ Spanish Archives. Docket 35. 1896. No. 19.

this problem. He, for his part, stood ready at a moment's notice to aid the Count in any way he could, and he was happy to report that already he had done something that would make the Ambassador's task easier:

"Mr. Schewitz, as I informed you in my telegram, left Madrid very well informed, stimulated by a pleasant conversation with Her Majesty the Queen, and resolved to use his good offices with his chief in our behalf. I should add that he made no binding commitment, lacking authority for such action. He took with him, for the Czar, a letter from the Queen expressing her thanks for the gracious treatment accorded our Embassy at St. Petersburg, and soliciting his interest in the Cuban matter.

M. Hanotaux¹² has offered to use his influence with Lobanoff¹³ to the end that Russia shall not decline to take the initiative. I expect that Count Goluchowski will take the same course with even greater interest and zeal; and, finally, I look to see the Austrian Emperor do likewise, when he has his interview with the Czar at Vienna towards the end of August."¹⁴

Russia, as will be made clear in the course of this survey, was at no time disposed to do anything which might displease the United States. After the consolidation of the Balkan states, and because of the impossibility of Russia's getting to the Dardanelles, the Czar's government had bent all its efforts towards an eastward expansion. Japan had just won a resounding victory over China, and not much time had passed since the signing of the Treaty of Shimoneseki between Japan and China (1894), in which China conceded to Japan, not only territory, but also the independence of Korea, which, because of attendant circumstances, meant the beginning of Japan's conquest of Korea. This Eastern situation, upon which the aspirations of all the great powers were soon to be centered (giving occasion to what Lord Salisbury sardonically characterized as the "battle of the concessions"), and in which the new military power of

¹² Gabriel Hanotaux, French Foreign Minister.

¹³ Prince Alexis Borisovitch Lobanoff-Rostovski, Foreign Minister of Russia 1895-1896.

¹⁴ Spanish Archives.

Japan commenced its rise, made it a fantastic dream that Russia would, for a mere ideal, risk the loss of America's friendship, though unquestionably interested in and concerned for the Spanish dynasty.

The Duke de Tetuán in dealing with the French Government, made more use of the French Ambassador to Madrid, the Marquis de Reverseaux, than of Spain's own envoy in Paris, the Duke de Mandas. The Marquis de Reverseaux, a diplomat of the old school, had shown his affection for Spain on his two missions, during this period, at Madrid and at Vienna.

It is a singular fact that, for years, under the Republic, French diplomacy continued in the hands of "middle-of-the-roaders," men not far from reactionaries. The diplomatic service is always the last branch of any government to give way to changes in regimen, and the advent of new political ideas. The function of looking after the foreign interests of a country, seems on its face an easy task, one which almost anybody can perform; actually, of all fields of statecraft, there is none so difficult. Diplomacy consists not merely of ideas and technique; it involves habit, a special psychology, tradition, and, one might even add, scent—a spontaneous and almost feminine intuition. It must be animated also by a spirit that is at once buoyant and robust. When governments change, new ministers almost always refrain from any violent shifts and replacements in the diplomatic service.

Apparently the Duke de Tetuán did not put as much trust in the friendliness of the German Ambassador, Radowitz, as he did in that of the Marquis de Reverseaux, and, on the few occasions when he saw Radowitz, he was reserved and noncommittal. Radowitz, however, was active and diligent. He learned all about the project from his colleagues, and seems to have looked upon it with approval.

The diplomacy of Germany, shaped to rigid logic, was not to O'Donnell's liking, and he preferred to deal, so far as he was able, directly with the Kaiser, through the

Spanish Ambassador at Berlin, Mendez Vigo, rather than the German Foreign Office. The dislike which O'Donnell had for German diplomacy, reveals itself amusingly in the letter he sent Mendez Vigo, with instructions to persuade Germany to forward Russian acceptance of leadership in the projected coalition: "[I] leave [everything] to your discretion, including the form and manner of your action in initiating and carrying on the negotiations with these gentlemen, whom you know better than I, and whom, in all truth, I find exceedingly difficult." ¹⁵

In the case of Italy, the Spanish Minister, in his letter to Count de Benomar, Spanish Ambassador to Rome, assumed that there would be no difficulty whatever in getting the Marquis Visconti Venosta, Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, to suggest Russia's taking the initiative in forming the coalition:

"It is clear that since the first cue for our project came to me from Baron de Renzis [Italy's envoy to Madrid], I am safe in assuming that his government will give its approval, as I think all the Great Powers will do. The difficulty lies in getting Russia to accept. I feel sure that France will help us with Russia, and that we can count on even greater aid from Austria, should that be necessary. While I expect that in the interview between the two Emperors in Vienna late in August, the Austrian Emperor will take up the matter with the Czar, I think it very desirable, in addition, and not at all out of place, that Italy work actively to the same end at St. Petersburg if, as I believe to be the case, Italy is in accord, in principle, with the substance of the Memorandum." ¹⁶

There were several reasons for O'Donnell's desire that Italy should make an appeal to the Czar's government. The heir presumptive to the Italian throne was to be married shortly to Princess Elena of Montenegro, who had passed much of her life at the Russian court. Two of the Princess' sisters had married in Russia, and all three were popular and influential in St. Petersburg society—so much so, that later, during the Great War,

¹⁵ Spanish Archives. 1896. No. 32.

¹⁶ Spanish Archives. 1896. No. 48.

the sisters came to be criticized for their political activities. The Czar was very fond of the Montenegrin royal family, and happy over the approaching wedding.

In all these communications from the head of the Spanish chancellery to his ambassadors in the great European capitals, there is evident a strong desire to awaken in the other courts an interest based on monarchical grounds. Time and circumstances were favorable to this strategy. The Queen Regent, Maria Cristina, had been born an archduchess of Austria. Everywhere in Europe, monarchs were in the habit, in defiance of ministers and parliaments, of intervening in the foreign relations of their countries in a manner which, while undoubtedly patriotic, was sometimes lacking in discretion and intelligence. Throughout most of Europe, the monarchical principle was still strong, and was of real value in preserving internal order.

Reading this correspondence between the Spanish Minister of State and the ambassadors, it is hard to realize that the times were separated from the Holy Alliance by nearly three-quarters of a century. It is true that the Memoranda made no reference to the monarchical principle, but that is easily explained. The reason is made clear in O'Donnell's personal letter accompanying the Memorandum to the Spanish envoy at London, Count de Casa Valencia, (the letters to the Ambassadors at Berlin, Rome, St. Petersburg, and Vienna being practically identical):

"It is requisite that you stress [in your conversations with Salisbury] the effects which the Cuban insurrection may have on the monarchy in Spain, on the Regency, and on the monarchical principle in general. You should stress also the consequences of a war with the United States, which may be forced upon us in defending our rights and our national honor; because any setbacks from which we might suffer, would be seized upon by the always alert Cuban insurgents. Everybody knows Queen Victoria's interest in and affection for our Regent, and it should consequently not be difficult for you to cause Lord Salisbury to give sympathetic consideration to these matters. I could not speak freely in the Memorandum on this highly important point

because, since a copy of the Memorandum is to be sent to the French republic, I do not consider this argument as having the general character it should have, to be effective at Paris." ¹⁷

Allusion has been made here to the Holy Alliance. Actually, during the end of the nineteenth century,—a time when nationalism was everywhere strong and vigorous—the spirit of that old alliance of princes continued to pervade the foreign relations of the European monarchies. Though uprooted from the internal life of nations, it yet maintained itself with more or less effectiveness, according to cases and countries, in the foreign affairs of all, oftentimes putting serious difficulties in the way of responsible ministries. More curious yet, we find evidence of it in the unification of peoples that then occurred, despite princes and frontiers. As, early in the century, liberals felt themselves united in misfortune, they were, towards the end of it, united in success, a success achieved in defiance of the treaties and alliances of the chancelleries.

Political ideas are like sonorous waves of sound, whose echoes continue long after they have ceased to be audible to human ears.

¹⁷ Spanish Archives. 1896.

CHAPTER II

PURPOSES OF THE "MEMORANDUM"

FOR reasons having to do with office routine, the Memorandum, the personal letters, and the Royal Order instructing the Spanish Ambassadors abroad concerning the handling of the Memorandum, were despatched somewhat later than had been originally intended.

Before their actual despatch President Grover Cleveland issued (July 27, 1896) a proclamation, reciting the provisions of the neutrality laws as they had been interpreted by the United States Supreme Court, and giving warning of severe penalties to be invoked against offenders.

If we did not, today, know with certainty that the American Government was not then aware of the plot being hatched in Europe, we might logically attribute Cleveland's action to his learning of the Spanish project through the agency of some friendly power. It is a not infrequent dereliction of historians, in reconstructing little known past events, to draw seemingly incontrovertible inferences, actually far from the truth. In the present case, authentic documents exist to prove that, although O'Donnell had the Memorandum written out and ready for transmittal in July 1896, the Washington Government did not learn of its existence, until considerably later. President Cleveland's reiteration of the neutrality of the United States, in his proclamation of July 27, had therefore no connection whatever with O'Donnell's plan for promoting European intervention, its purpose being solely to place on the United States Government the reproach of failing to take a stand against its citizens giving aid to the Cuban rebellion.

This, at all events, is the conclusion to which the documents, including some until now unpublished, strongly point.

O'Donnell did not allow President Cleveland's proclamation to swerve him from his previous determination. In fact the only heed he gave it, was to emphasize, in a postscript added to the personal letters accompanying the Memorandum, that the intentions of his Government continued unchanged. The Cleveland Administration had, he pointed out, referred, on other occasions, to its benevolent intentions; this new gesture was a mere reiteration, and in no way altered the condition the Memorandum was designed to remedy; namely, "the threatening possibilities incident to the convening of the American Congress in December next, and the change in Presidents [in March 1897]."

Seven copies of the Memorandum were prepared and sent out—one to each Spanish ambassador at the six great capitals of Europe, and one to the Spanish Chargé d'Affaires at the Vatican, for delivery to Cardinal Rampolla, Vatican Secretary of State. O'Donnell's purpose in sending the note to the Pope, is stated in his letter of transmittal:

Her Majesty's Government, grateful for the many kindly attentions paid them by His Holiness, especially those inspired by the insurrection of our Cuban colony, and wishing to show once again our appreciation and respect, take pleasure in apprising His Holiness, in confidence, of negotiations to which we attach great importance, having for their aim the diminution or conclusion of assistance given by the people of the United States to the Cuban rebels.¹

Copies of the Memorandum, carried by special couriers, reached their respective destinations during the early days of August, 1896. Great secrecy had attended the preparation of the copies, and they had been entrusted, for delivery, only to men in whose loyalty O'Don-

¹ Spanish Archives. 1896.

nell had complete confidence. Indeed, the greatest possible caution had been observed in connection with the Memorandum from the very beginning, with the result that its existence was known, prior to its despatch, only to the Spanish ministers and the six ambassadors at Madrid.

Since the Memorandum has never before been published, a brief description of it will not be amiss.

This note, a really well thought out paper possessing not a little dialectic force, may be divided into two parts: one, dealing with the status of Cuba, which lacks international importance, and need not be dealt with here in detail; the second, reviewing and challenging the attitude of the United States, which is pertinent to our subject.

In the first part, O'Donnell limited himself to describing the progress made by Cuba following the Ten Years War (1868-1878):

In finances: Sugar exports had doubled, rising from 600,000 tons in 1878 to 1,018,000 in 1894. Tobacco, which in 1878 had a crop value of \$17,505,000, in 1894 brought in \$20,900,000. Commerce in general had risen during these years from \$140,000,000 to \$213,000,000. The population of the Island had increased from 1,400,000 to 1,600,000.

In government: After 1878, Spain had introduced important reforms, which had given the people of Cuba the full rights of Spanish citizens. After 1881, individual liberty had been guaranteed, and, in 1886, slavery had been completely abolished. Legislation had further been enacted conceding ample representation in the Spanish Cortes, consisting of sixteen Senators and thirty Deputies, the Deputies being elected by popular vote, and the Senators by elected delegates. Under a law passed in 1895, the organization of the colonial government had been still further liberalized. An Administrative Council, selected jointly by popular vote and Royal appointment, took over all the functions connected with public works, land and sea postal and telegraphic systems, agriculture, industry and commerce, immigration and coloni-

zation, public education, charity and public health. The preparing of the budgets for these services, and their adoption, were also in the hands of the Administrative Council, which also had an advisory voice in the adoption of the general budget.

The Memorandum frankly admitted the existence of a widespread feeling that Spain's colonial administration had been faulty, and that Cuba had been badly governed. But it pointed out that Porto Rico had been under identical conditions, contented and prosperous; which implied that Cuba's ills were traceable to the Cubans themselves, rather than to any fault of Spain.

This section of the note, in which O'Donnell sought to establish the justice of Spain's cause, can be easily refuted. Unfortunately for Spain, the unfavorable opinion of the Spanish administration, to which the Memorandum alludes, had a very substantial basis in fact. A Spanish Captain-General governed Cuba as he liked; taxes were levied from the Metropolis; municipal liberties, to the small degree that they existed, were enjoyed only by Spaniards resident in Cuba; as to public works, communications, public education, immigration, colonization, industry—if these prospered, it was not because of the colonial administration. Personal liberty was at the mercy of functionaries of high or low degree, emanating from Madrid. Suffrage depended upon the whim of the Captain-General. A native Cuban might on occasion rise to the lowermost ranks in the colonial government, but all the higher places went to Spaniards, chosen for political reasons, and whose one ideal was to get rich quickly.

To admit in the Memorandum that the government of Cuba was generally regarded as bad, was but to repeat what most Spaniards themselves felt and said, among them some of Spain's ablest public men.

Though the persuasive force of the Memorandum is admittedly very great, one might say of it what Machiavelli once said about the discourses of Savonarola—"those ignorant of the subject find them perfect."

The Chancelleries of Europe undoubtedly knew the situation in Cuba to its last tragic detail, but were unmoved by it—in all matters ruled by the mind and not

the heart, lack of interest is as bad as lack of knowledge. O'Donnell could say what he chose about the government of Cuba, with none to gainsay him. Doubtless one of the reasons which influenced him to devote part of the Memorandum to a eulogy of Spain's administration of her Antillean colony, was a wish to refute the campaign by radicals in the press of Europe, on behalf of the Cuban insurrection.

Following this first part of the Memorandum, which might be termed an apologia-eulogy, the second part took an abruptly different course. "We would," it states, with a naiveté rather extraordinary in a modern state paper, "have smothered the rebellion with ease, had the rebels accepted the gage we offered them. But they would not accept it. Instead of abiding by military rules and customs, and resting their hopes of winning on victories gained in a military way, they based their strategy on the accident that the terrain in Cuba is broken."

"In sixteen months Spain has despatched ten military expeditions to the Island—a notably energetic effort on our part. These expeditions totalled 127,000 men, all perfectly organized and equipped."

A little farther along, the document reverts to this subject:

"At this moment another expedition of 40,000 men is being prepared, and that will be followed by another of 20,000. Thus we shall have in Cuba more than 200,000 men, including casualty replacements and the regiments of *voluntarios*, representing all branches of military service."

This military effort which Spain was making, and even more so the one Spain was to make a little later, was, everything considered, extraordinary and heroic. Looking back upon it today after the passage of many years, and viewing it as an isolated historical event, one cannot but admire the tenacious will and the unyielding determination of the Government presided over by Cánovas. At the same time, it is but just, that we judge at its true value, the extraordinary vitality shown by Cuba. Cuba had under arms—and such arms!—not more than 30,000 men. This relatively tiny force not only

resisted and flouted the redoubtable Spanish armies, but actually coursed from one end of the Island to the other, traveling more than a thousand miles, and in the end imposed its control over practically the entire country. It is true, as O'Donnell somewhat bitterly complains in the Memorandum, that the Cubans fought as guerillas. But given the numerical disproportion between the two forces, and the serious lack of arms and munitions which handicapped the Cubans, it is obvious that, for them, no other way of fighting was expedient or even possible. Even so, the engagements were extremely sanguinary, and the Island was bathed daily in blood. Furthermore, if the conduct of the Cuban generals is open to criticism, what is one to say of Generals Weyler and Blanco, who kept their forces in great columns, operating with compact masses, instead of dividing and subdividing their troops in imitation of the methods of the enemy?

Why, the Note asks, do the Cubans continue to resist Spain's authority? And it answers, categorically and over-simply: Because they are encouraged by the United States. From the United States, men and supplies of war depart in a steady flow for Cuba, and with them goes the moral support of the American people. The filibustering expeditions are the real reason why Cuba continues in revolt. As often as Spain has protested to the Government of the United States against these activities, our protests have been acknowledged, but no action has followed. Infractions of the laws remain unpunished. Prosecuting officials and juries refuse to take action. A Junta which proclaims itself the organizing force of the revolution, maintains, unmolested, its headquarters in New York. Free circulation is permitted to books, pamphlets, and newspapers which cry for war against Spain. Individuals who have become naturalized Americans are vested with the character of diplomatic representatives of the imaginary Cuban Republic. Well-known banking firms advertise filibuster loans to the American public. "And all this goes on," avers the Memorandum, in a paroxysm of indignation accented by a flurry of exclamation points, "in violation of the mutual friendship of

Spain and the United States which is engrossed in treaties, and in despite of the frequent proclamations of his benevolent intentions by the Chief Executive of the United States!"

The existing situation, which the Queen's Government regarded as exceedingly serious, would soon, said the Note, become even more threatening, due to the probable victory in the approaching election of the Republican Party. The Republican Convention at St. Louis adopted a platform in which it expressed sympathy for Cuba's aspirations to independence, and at the same time repudiated European interference.

Under the circumstances, the Government of Her Majesty would regard themselves as faithless to their duty, if they did not place before the consideration of the cabinets of the Great Powers of Europe, the special dangers which they see looming in the near future, and which, though especially affecting Spain, hold also a threat to colonial and maritime nations in general, and may even compromise other very important European interests.

The Memorandum at this point reaches its climax. All that follows is but extension of the theme, "This question is a Spanish one, but the interests it touches are not Spain's alone, but all Europe's."

A brief historical review of the attitude of the Government of the United States with respect to Cuba comes next:

"The interest of the American Government in Cuba began with Jefferson's effort in 1809 to acquire the Island. 'Cuba,' wrote Jefferson to President Madison, 'can be defended by us without the necessity of ships, and this is the principle which should limit our aspirations. We ought not to undertake anything which would necessitate ships for Cuba's defense.'"

Somewhat later, in 1823, John Quincy Adams, then Secretary of State, wrote to the American Minister at Madrid that annexation of Cuba was indispensable to the continuity and integrity of the Union. In 1825, Secretary of State Clay declared that, regardless of situations that might arise in the future the United States

would never consent to Cuba's belonging to any nation in Europe except Spain.

So strong was the determination of the American Government in 1843 that the status of Cuba should not be changed (by her falling into the hands of a naval power) that when it became rumored that General Espartero, with the support of England, was preparing an audacious coup to occupy the Island, the American Minister at Madrid was instructed to offer to Spain all the moral and material aid she asked, and as a result an American squadron was sent to Havana. The Government of the United States, the Memorandum recounts, went even farther on that occasion, and counseled the Spanish Government to "execute every one aiding the rebellion; if the authorities (then in the Colony) should intervene, the people themselves ought to take justice into their own hands."

It needs perhaps to be explained that General Espartero held the post of Regent of Spain after Queen Maria Cristina, King Fernando VII's widow, had been expelled—Queen Isabel, Fernando VII's daughter, being still a minor. This was in 1843. In the same year Espartero himself was dislodged from the government by an oppositionist coalition with conservative leanings, headed by General Narvaez. It is to be supposed that revenge motivated Espartero in planning to occupy Cuba, since, as it happened, he had many friends in the Spanish Army in Cuba. At this time, England and France were quarreling over which should have dominance over the parties and governments of Spain. The former had aided Espartero, and the latter the Queen Mother, Maria Cristina, who was now an expatriate living in France. The rumor that Espartero intended, with England's approval, to occupy Spain's great Antillean colony, must have grown out of this situation, and must be considered as true.

After the allusions to the long-standing ambition of the United States to annex Cuba, the Memorandum asserts that only when Zachary Taylor was President, did the United States recognize all of Spain's rights. This President. "whom Spain will always remember with

gratitude, faithful to the international obligations of his country, sternly opposed" the piratical expeditions which in 1849, as in 1896, were audaciously leaving the United States for Cuba, declaring that "an attempt to invade the territory of a friendly nation is in high degree criminal, since it tends to put in danger the peace of this nation, and to compromise its honor."

The two great maritime powers of Taylor's time, England and France, shared Taylor's opinion, and placed their squadrons like dykes across the path of the "scandalous" filibustering expeditions, with orders to oppose with force, in cooperation with the authorities of Cuba, any landings that might be attempted. Two years later, these same powers went farther, and proposed to the United States a treaty of a triple guarantee for Cuba, designed to impede or prevent every act of aggression or violence against Spanish sovereignty over the Island.

"The two great European nations showed keen interest in this project, for they understood, as Spain hopes they and also the other Great Powers created by the subsequent political evolution of Europe will understand, that there is inherent in the Cuban question a problem supremely European, affecting not only the development and future of Spain, but also the general interest of Europe, because very grave international consequences may result from the Cuban insurrection, and the daily more absorbent and expansive Monroe Doctrine."

In support of this allegation, the Memorandum quoted the argument used by England and France in 1852, when they proposed a treaty of guarantee to the United States:

"In view of your declaration (on the part of the United States) that you will not consent that a European power absorb Cuba, we declare on our part that we shall not consent to Cuba's passing from the control of Spain to that of any other country, and, to prevent the occurrence of misunderstandings, we invite the Washington Government to join with us in a declaration by the three powers renouncing future possession of the Island of Cuba."

O'Donnell considered that the logic supporting this stand was as valid in 1896 as it had been forty-four years before:

Our situation with respect to Cuba and the United States is today what it was in 1852—the only change that has occurred is that the great maritime and colonial nations of Europe have increased in numbers: to France and England, have been added Germany, Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Russia. The motives which, in 1852, actuated the representatives of the European commercial and maritime nations, exist today unchanged; and they dictate a course which, if not identical with the suggestion of 1852, ought certainly to be similar, and ought at all events to be effective. Only thus can the dangers be obviated, which everybody having any relation of responsibility for the interest and prestige of Europe, sees looming ahead. If conditions have changed materially since 1852, it is in the greater interest which Europe has in America. This interest is destined in the future, with the opening of an interoceanic canal, to be intensified, and Europe will be faced with the imperative necessity of maintaining the *status quo* of political and commercial interests in the region about the Gulf of Mexico.

O'Donnell admitted that the United States had refused to sign the proposed treaty of guarantee in 1852, and that consequently the treaty was without effect. But he argued that, since the situation of the earlier period was reproducing itself in identical form, and since the interests of Europe were the same in 1896 as they had been in 1852, there was danger that disputes would arise involving Europe, because of the determination of the United States to take over and control Cuba:

“Thus the United States, by not permitting Cuba to pass into the hands of a European power; by failing to take sufficiently energetic steps, through the enactment of laws and in other ways, to curb the activities of filibusters; by coddling the spirit of rebellion in Cuba; by the moral and material aid given by American citizens to the revolutionaries, and by denying to the Island the opportunity to govern itself—because of all this, the conclusion is inescapable that the aspiration of North America is to make the Antillean island a part of the American confederation.”

Before reaching its conclusion, the Memorandum dealt with one other subject. The traditional American policy towards civil wars, it asserted, was one of absolute non-interference by outsiders. In the War of Secession in

1861, the United States had been insistent that no aid be given the rebels by foreign nations. In support of this contention, the Memorandum quoted the following passage from a letter of the American Secretary of State to Mr. Dayton, American Minister at Paris, June 17th, 1861: ²

Every instruction which this government has given to its representatives abroad since the recent change of administration took place, has expressed our profound anxiety lest the disloyal citizens who are engaged in an attempt to overthrow the Union, should obtain aid and assistance from foreign nations, either in the form of a recognition of their pretended sovereignty, or in some other and more qualified or guarded manner. Every instruction has expressed our full belief that without such aid or assistance, the insurrection would speedily come to an end, while any advantage that it could derive from such aid or assistance, could serve no other purpose than to protract the existing struggle, and aggravate the evils it is inflicting on our country, and on foreign and friendly nations. Every instruction bears evidence of an earnest solicitude to avoid even an appearance of menace, or of want of comity towards foreign powers. But at the same time it emphatically announces, as is now seen to have been necessary, our purpose not to allow any one of them to expect to remain in friendship with us, if it should, with whatever motive, practically render such aid or assistance to the insurgents.

O'Donnell declared that, on that occasion, Spain had adjusted herself to these conditions, and he added that the United States Government had not only demanded of others an attitude of non-interference, but had also itself observed such an attitude with respect to others. When, because of the rebellion in Canada in 1838, numerous bands were recruited and organized by the revolutionists on American soil, the United States Congress, considering that the existing laws were not adequate for the suppression of these activities, passed a more drastic law (which was rescinded two years later, after the Canadian crisis was past).

Following this digression, the Memorandum affirmed, in conclusion, that although President Cleveland had

² U. S. State Department Archives.

always shown himself well disposed, this had not been sufficient to prevent harm to Spain's interests; that Spain was amicably inclined towards the United States; and that Spain intended to reform its Cuban government, just as soon as the revolution should be put down.

For these divers and sundry reasons, the Memorandum begged the good offices of the Great Powers.

This lengthy document brings to mind, across the span of many centuries, the discourse which Thucydides put into the mouths of the Corinthians, when they protested to the Athenians against giving aid to the inhabitants of Cocyras, who had rebelled against them, and asked help of Athens. Time and circumstance do not alter human affairs fundamentally. Like Spain, the Corinthians reproached their colony for being so continuously rebellious; it was their frequent revolts which had made the use of force against them necessary. Again like Spain, in pointing to the happy state of Porto Rico, so also the Corinthians exclaimed, "Our other colonies respect us—more, they love us."

As Spain, in the Memorandum, explained why the United States should not intervene in the dispute between homeland and colony, recalling Spain's forbearance during the American War of Secession; and as Spain, alleging the obligations of international justice interpreted by the Americans themselves, so also the Corinthians:

"Justice demands that you be neutrals . . . because you are bound to us by a treaty, whereas with the Corcyreans you have no ties whatever. Do not attempt to give your protection to rebels. When the people of Samos rebelled and Peloponnesus was divided over whether to help them or not, we were not against you, and we felt that everyone had a right to punish his allies.* If now you give aid to rebelling peoples . . . you will establish a custom, which is more against you than against us. These are our rights; they are founded on the laws of Greece [International Law!]"⁴

* The word "allies" here signifies a city belonging to a fixed political organism.

⁴ History of Thucydides, Book 1, paragraph 37 et seq.

And the Corinthians, according to Thucydides, who liked to make the personages of his history pronounce discourses, appealed, just as later the Spanish Minister of State did, to the interest of all Greece; that is, to the international concert of the time.

Strange coincidence! And the outcome of this ancient quarrel was identical with that of the Spanish-American dispute over Cuba. Athenians and Corcyraeans fought side by side for the freedom of the latter.

The Spanish Memorandum is an extremely able document, and one which makes a profound impression upon the reader. Nevertheless, its treatment of the internal politics of Cuba is incomplete, as is also its discussion of the international aspects of the whole Cuban question. Finally, it sins against diplomatic strategy.

In Europe, during the 1890's, there was a vogue for interventions based on humanitarian grounds. All the great powers had their eyes fixed on the Eastern Mediterranean, and the nearby Orient. Intellectuals were everywhere interesting themselves in peoples subject to the rule of violent governments. Lord Salisbury, not wishing to be second to Gladstone, was concerning himself with Turkish atrocities. The tide of humanitarianism rose, to lap at the feet of even the Czar of Russia. He, being importuned on one occasion by a foreign ambassador to join in a humanitarian protest, had recourse to the excuse that, as he himself was an autocrat, it did not seem appropriate for him to proscribe the liberties of another absolute monarch. There was widespread sympathy for rebellious Crete, and poets were giving a new freshness and vigor to the epic Philohellenian poems. A *fin de siècle* romanticism was in the air—though later it disappeared quickly—combined with a vigorous reaction against the coldly calculating methods of statesmen, in dealing with the difficult problems they had to cope with.

If O'Donnell had succeeded in getting the Great Powers of Europe to join for the purpose, in effect, of aiding General Weyler in Cuba—Weyler, with his reconcentration camps which decimated entire communities, and his war without quarter against the insurgents—if that

had happened, there would inevitably have arisen a formidable opposition by the peoples of the participating governments, and condemnation by public opinion everywhere. There is no doubt, as will be shown farther along in these pages, that the crowned heads of Europe were at all times anxious to help the Queen of Spain—an admirable woman and a prudent sovereign, if implacable and severe with her colonies—but the people themselves, and also the responsible ministries, were more discreet, and they took into account factors and contingencies which the sovereigns ignored.

The Memorandum had very ambitious aims. They were set down as demands in a letter to accompany the Memorandum:

“Statement of Spain’s demands. Corresponding to the Memorandum of 1896. Conclusions:

1. That the President of the United States publish a proclamation analogous to those issued by his predecessors Van Buren, Taylor, Millard Fillmore, and Franklin Pierce in the years 1838, 1841, 1849, 1851, and 1859, condemning the giving of aid to filibustering expeditions to Cuba, and warning American citizens engaging in such activities, not to look to the American government for succor, in case they should get into trouble. The proclamations issued by the abovementioned Presidents contained declarations of this character.

2. That the American Congress again enact laws like those of 1838, which had for their object the ending of military expeditions in support of the Canadian insurrection.

3. That an honest interpretation, free of casuistic exaggeration, be made by the American Government of the Treaty of 1795, and the Protocol of 1877.

4. That the Government of the United States give careful scrutiny to applications for naturalization, and that the requirements for naturalization be made more strict.

5. That the Government of the United States interpret its present laws in a spirit favorable to Spain’s interests.

6. That the Government of the United States punish severely those of its officials who are guilty of negligence in the performance of their duty to prevent the organization of filibustering expeditions to Cuba.

7. That the Government of the United States formulate such rules as are within the competence of the executive power, to harass the Cuban junta in New York, which carries on, openly, its function of organizing the revolution; and that it also put difficulties in the way of the junta's getting material and moral aid for the revolution from the people of the United States.

8. That the American Government make only declarations based on facts, and that the declarations it does make, shall be in a spirit of friendship and concord, thereby destroying the hope animating the Cuban rebels, of receiving aid from beyond Cuba's shores.

9. That the Minister of Spain in Washington receive, in his dealings with the Government of the United States, the willing assistance and the support of his colleagues, the diplomatic envoys of the Great Powers."

The extraordinary character of these demands can be appreciated the more today because of the catastrophe provoked by similar demands made by Austria on Servia in 1914. Though positive proof is lacking, the correlation between the documents to which we have given our attention, indicates that the demands were formulated with the advice and approval of those among the foreign ambassadors at Madrid who had favored Spain's making concrete proposals in the Memorandum. But that any of the ambassadors should have conceived that O'Donnell would go to such extremes is not credible; to believe so would be to question their sanity. For O'Donnell to go to such lengths is only excusable, since he was the representative of the interested government. Incidentally, it would seem that these demands, on coming to the knowledge of the ambassadors, caused some of them to change their minds about the project. As will be seen, the attitude of several of them did change.

It is obvious that no enterprise such as this one of O'Donnell's could hope for success. Demands so humiliating in character could hardly succeed with a nation like the United States, young, rich, ambitious, energetic, democratic, with a people quick to take offense. Only two years before, in the famous dispute with Great Britain over the Venezuelan boundaries, the United States

had, in its reply, manifested a spirit of almost reckless audacity.

Despite the momentary superficial calm in Europe, the powers there, jealous each of the other, would not risk their peace and their prestige for a principle of Europe's past dominion over America, a principle, furthermore, not in popular favor in any country. As early as 1870, Giuseppe Mazzini, writing to a Frenchman, Gustav Paul Cluseret, who had risen to high place in the United States during the War of Secession, and who had invited Mazzini's interest in the Cuban question—the Ten Years War was then going on in Cuba, and was attracting the attention of all the civilized world—acceded to the invitation, and declared that he could not understand why the United States did not intervene in Cuba's favor. "I am profoundly saddened," wrote the founder of "Young Italy," destined, later, to be the organizer of "Young Europe," "by the attitude of indifference which the United States has shown towards Cuba. The last act of the great American drama, (colonial emancipation), is being played on the stage of that Island; Cuba's revolt against Spain is the direct outgrowth of your war for independence. It is not logical, nor is it good, nor is it proper that the United States, having unfurled a banner, should now callously abandon to destruction those who have followed in their footsteps." Mazzini attributed this attitude to fear; and fear on the part of the great American Republic seemed to him inexplicable. "Why should the United States choose this moment to reveal the fear inspired in them by the monarchical diplomacy of Europe? Why show this fear at a time when the institution of monarchy is dying among us, in Spain [he refers to the establishment of the Republic in 1869/70] and everywhere else?" And farther along in the same letter he continued: "This child that has grown to manhood and has become a veritable giant among nations—will it never understand the providential mission it is called upon to fulfill on this earth?"⁵

Between 1870 and 1896 the strength of the United

⁵ These passages from Mazzini's letter are from a book in preparation by Dr. Emeterio Santovenia of Havana, with the title "Accords and Conflicts Over Cuba."

States had increased enormously, and even greater progress had been made in the development of democratic principles. Among the American people, the prestige of the Government, and their respect for its sovereignty, had never been greater.

The purposes of the Memorandum, prudently set forth in a separate document, and not included in the Memorandum itself, reveal that O'Donnell had, faced with the dangers which threatened his country, lost all sense of proportion, as well as any faculty he may have had for judging material and moral values.

CHAPTER III

O'DONNELL IS BETRAYED

SPANISH diplomacy of the time of Queen Cristina can be both praised and censured. It deserves praise for its honesty. In the Conference of Algieras, over a question which if not vital to Spain was at least exceedingly important to her, the Spanish delegate, Duke de Almodóvar del Rio, went from man to man beating his breast and exclaiming, "The respectability of Spain! The dignity of Spain! The honor of Spain!" And this while the representatives of the other powers gave themselves over to a ferocious scramble for advantage! Censure may with justice be directed at the excessive credulity of the Spanish Ministers in believing that it would be easy for them to bring O'Donnell's *combinazione* into being. Spain is, indeed, the land of the madrigal.

A principle of Machiavelli (who has himself long been regarded as the very prototype of hypocrisy), in some advice he gave to Raphael de Medici, bizarre Florentine Ambassador to the court of His Catholic Majesty, was that "an ambassador should strive above everything else to acquire great consideration, which he can achieve if he comports himself always as a good and just man, if he be famed for his generosity and sincerity, if he eschews disagreeable and specious conduct, and if he avoids getting the name of saying one thing and believing another."

For Machiavelli, sincerity had the practical purpose of inspiring confidence. Without being cynical, it may be said that the art of knowing how to deal with people requires many other qualities in addition to sincerity. A degree of caution about opinions and advice received, is never out of place. But it is a mistake to carry caution to the point of stubborn disbelief, or to be so habitually

suspicious as to refuse to accept any information in good faith, especially when it comes from a friendly source. It is true, of course, that not even the best-intentioned adviser makes so intense a mental effort as when he himself must take action. And the sad fact about Spain is that, for three quarters of a century Spanish diplomacy had, with blind confidence, followed alternatively the counsels of England and France, and had, as a consequence, lost the habit of thinking for itself.

As the time approached for putting into action the plan for getting Europe's aid in defense of Spain's interests in Cuba, O'Donnell noted that the enthusiasm which had been shown up to then by the representatives of the Great Powers had begun to cool. There can be no question that the six ambassadors previously had given their approval to the ideas in the Spanish Memorandum; nor can there be any doubt that they had communicated these ideas to their respective governments. It is likewise certain that some of the envoys, like de Renzis of Italy, Drummond Wolff of England, and Count Dubskey of Austria-Hungary, had shown enthusiasm for the project. According to O'Donnell, the man who had inspired the plan in the first place was de Renzis,¹ and the English ambassador was also named as a principal early collaborator.² But now something was happening which O'Donnell could not understand. Enthusiasm had turned to reserve; reserve to indifference.

It is a justifiable surmise, since the documents themselves do not give us the reasons for this retreat, that the governments involved, after having permitted their ambassadors to participate in the early stages of the project, had instructed their representatives to assume a more guarded attitude, when the time for action approached. It is possible, also, that these same ambassadors, well disposed during the initial period, feared to shoulder definite responsibilities when the moment for decision came. And, finally, it may be accepted that the extreme character of Spain's demands, once they became known,

¹ Spanish Archives. Docket 35.

² Spanish Archives. Docket 35.

had convinced the foreign diplomats that, if their countries should give support to so provocative an attitude, they would themselves be assuming grave moral and political responsibilities. It would have been a more serious threat to O'Donnell's project, if the reason for the reserve now apparent, had been a change in attitude towards the United States of any of the governments which, in the beginning, had looked with approval, or at least, had not protested against, the Spanish plan.

At all events, Foreign Minister O'Donnell wrote on August 11, 1896, to the President of the Spanish Council of Ministers, don Antonio Cánovas del Castillo, to "advise him of a serious contretemps he had experienced in the matter of the Memorandum." But O'Donnell, always bubbling over with confidence, added that the case was one to which the old saying was applicable, "There is no evil that does not bring some good." The contretemps was that news about the Memorandum, which had been prepared with so much secrecy, had somehow leaked out; that the American Minister, Hannis Taylor, knew all about it; that England and France no longer approved the idea; and that it had been necessary to promise not to present the document to the powers. The good which O'Donnell believed might be conjoined with this evil was that, since knowledge of the Memorandum had got out, friendly governments would learn about it, and this without Spain's having taken the formal step of presenting it to them. He saw success for the Memorandum growing out of the accident of its becoming known, and this success won without risking a critical contretemps with the United States. Never in all the centuries has a more incurably optimistic man than O'Donnell been at the head of any chancellery.

In substance, O'Donnell's report to the President of the Spanish Council of Ministers said:

The British Ambassador had visited O'Donnell, and recommended abandonment of the plan for sending the Memorandum to the Great Powers. Irritated but not surprised, for he already had noticed that Wolff and several other ambassadors had changed their tune, O'Donnell had explained the reasons which impelled Spain to go on: that Wolff himself and others of his colleagues

had privately encouraged this project, and that he (O'Donnell) did not understand why, since the project had progressed so far, there should now be a change of front. He added that there was not sufficient reason for such a retreat in the proclamation just issued by President Cleveland, announcing continuance of the policy of strict neutrality; since everybody knew that Spain had no fear of any attitude decisively hostile, so long as Cleveland was President, and Olney Secretary of State. On the contrary, he said, Spain's preoccupation had to do with the future, as the Memorandum itself pointed out, namely, the period following the next Presidential election. Wolff explained, as best he could, the contradiction between his present and former attitude, and ended by defining the conversation as a mere exchange of views. The Duke, in turn, agreed to consider Wolff's recommendation that the Memorandum be suppressed.

This interview took place in the morning. In the afternoon, O'Donnell went to a bull-fight at San Sebastian where, as customary in August, the Cortes was assembled. Hannis Taylor was also there, and, during the afternoon, visited O'Donnell in his box. No one noticed in Taylor's mien any hint of agitation. His conversation with O'Donnell was limited to the courteous amenities. O'Donnell on returning to his home found a note from Wolff awaiting him, asking very urgently for an audience. O'Donnell sent word that he would see him that night at 10:30. At that time, Wolff stated that the American Minister had visited him, and had, in a very excited manner, stated that he had learned from confidential and reliable sources of the Memorandum dealing with Spanish-American relations that O'Donnell had sent, or was about to send, to the Great Powers; and that, irrespective of phrasing, he considered it an insult to his President, and to his Government. The American Minister, Wolff said further, had told him that such an action would compromise the relations of the two countries; that he would have to send an immediate report to his superiors; and that news of the happening, when published in American newspapers, would have tremendous repercussions. Wolff explained to O'Donnell, in conclusion, that he had been able to moderate his col-

league's excitement only by offering to act as an intermediary between him and O'Donnell.

The Duke expressed his willingness to receive the American Minister, and suggested that Taylor call on him at 3 o'clock the following afternoon; whereupon Wolff offered to transmit the Duke's invitation to Taylor, who was even then awaiting such a message.

Next morning O'Donnell received a call, also, from the French ambassador, the Marquis de Reverseaux, who, like Wolff, now felt that the Memorandum should not be sent to the Great Powers.

O'Donnell, after relating the foregoing in his letter to Cánovas, stated that he had well-founded suspicions as to who had played the role of informer. "Without having positive proof to support my statement, I am nevertheless sure about the identity of Mr. Taylor's informant, and I also know that this person first betrayed us by indirection, and later openly. I can make a guess also as to his motive. Finally, I think I know what is behind the reserve that has come over the ambassadors. As a consequence of what has happened, I am moving slowly and cautiously in the matter of formally transmitting the Memorandum, awaiting the time when the road ahead shall be clear." ³

(O'Donnell adverted somewhat later to these suspicions, in a letter to the Spanish Ambassadors abroad: "The ones who helped us first," he wrote, "were the ones who first deserted us.")

The Duke believed that Taylor's informants were a journalist named Houghton, and a personage of high station who had amplified to Taylor upon Houghton's information. This personage was, in O'Donnell's opinion, none other than the British Ambassador himself.

On August 11th, the day O'Donnell wrote to Cánovas del Castillo, that is, a day after his conversation with Taylor, the London "Standard" published a despatch which accurately summarized the Memorandum:

³ Spanish Archives. Docket 35.

"The minister of State, the Duke de Tetuán, has prepared a Memorandum under the direction of the government of Señor Cánovas, with the object of explaining fully to the European governments the Cuban question, and the relations of Spain with the American Republics, and in particular with the United States, in connection with Cuban affairs. I am told that this document was very carefully written, in order that it should not offend President Cleveland and the people of the United States. After calling attention to the moral and material support which the Cuban revolutionists have had from the United States despite the correct attitude of the American government, the Memorandum urges mediation by the European powers on Spain's side, through the medium of friendly recommendations, with the object of causing the government of the United States to bring about a more strict observance of the neutrality laws. That done, Spain could overcome the rebellion, and afterwards implant the reforms of colonial home rule which she had solemnly promised to do.

The forthcoming Presidential election in the United States is the principal reason for this step, from which apparently the Government of Madrid has great hopes."

On the same night, in another despatch from Spain to the "Standard," the statement was made: "As a result of a long conversation today between the Minister of State, the Duke de Tetuán, and Mr. Taylor, Minister of the United States, it is said in the Cortes and official circles, that the Madrid Government would not send the Memorandum about the Cuban question to the European governments."

The first despatch proves that the correspondent in Madrid received his information from a trustworthy source. The second proves that he received his information from some one who knew that the Memorandum would be withdrawn.

The Duke de Tetuán always believed that Drummond Wolff had spoken of the matter in general terms to Houghton, awakening Houghton's keen interest; and had finally asked Houghton not to publish the story without Taylor's express authorization. The American Minister, knowing nothing of what was afoot, had been vastly surprised when the reporter visited him in quest

of an interview, and had at once rushed to Wolff's home in search of confirmation. Wolff had then revealed the whole matter and, in order to have a co-participant in the responsibility, had sent Taylor to the French Ambassador, who could not, in the face of his American colleague's perfect knowledge of the facts, deny them.⁴

A little before his death, in a book published posthumously, the former Spanish Minister of State wrote about this incident: ⁵

I do not believe it is yet time to give publicity to the origin, development, and incidents connected with that Memorandum which, after being written, was never given official circulation. . . . If we had entertained doubts [of Europe's unwillingness to collaborate] they would have been dissipated completely by the conference held with the American envoy, Mr. Taylor, on August 10, 1896, in San Sebastian. . . . Undoubtedly word about the Memorandum had been passed on to Mr. Taylor intentionally by some one with complete knowledge of it, who was determined that the project should fail. The identity of the traitor was known to the moral satisfaction of us all, though even now sufficient proofs are lacking to permit me to name him.

At San Sebastian, in short, suspicion pointed strongly to Wolff. So much so that the Minister of State who succeeded O'Donnell, Pío Gullón, in a telegram sent in March 1898 to Rascon, Spanish ambassador in London, said: "Please find out if Great Britain has really made a commitment with the United States with respect to the future, or if her attitude of reserve and silence is due merely to a wish to retain her independence, despite not having yet assumed obligations tacit or express with the Republic. Whatever information Your Excellency may let me have promptly on this point, will be very useful to us here, but, in making inquiries, it would perhaps be best that you do not consult Drummond Wolff."⁶

Concerning this incident, interesting from the double aspect of diplomacy and politics, we have the account

⁴ This account was given personally in 1925 by the third Duke de Tetuán.

⁵ "Apuntes del ex-Ministro de Estado Duque de Tetuán," Raoul Peant, Madrid. 1902. Vol. I, pages 296-7.

⁶ Spanish Archives. Docket 35.

of the American Minister, Hannis Taylor. We have, indeed, three accounts, all agreeing in substance, if differing in details. In the first of several cables dealing with the matter, which Taylor sent to the Department of State at Washington, he stated that he had heard about what was going on from a third person, and that the information thus received had been confirmed by two ambassadors. In the second cable, dated August 13, 1896, he amplified this description: ⁷

For some time I have been told that a serious apprehension exists here that the loss of Cuba would be immediately followed by the overthrow of the present dynasty. This apprehension, it seems, has been transmitted to Austria, whose anxiety—on account of the Queen's relations to its Royal house—has been so excited as to prompt the Minister for Foreign Affairs of that country to take an active interest in the affairs of Spain. . . .

In the conferences which were held here with the ambassadors on the subject, the Austrian Ambassador took the leading part, and when the suggestion was made that the President's recent proclamation changed the whole aspect of the case, he replied angrily that this constituted only a pretext for the representatives of the European powers who desired to withdraw from the undertaking. As I have heretofore indicated, the knowledge of this secret combination was revealed to me suddenly, and as the identical note was just about to be sent out by special messengers, I was suddenly called upon to act with promptness and decision. Feeling sure that there was not sufficient time to consult you by telegraph, as you are away from Washington, I felt it my duty to act upon my own responsibility, trusting to your kindness and confidence to approve my acts. I felt sure that the best way to frustrate the whole scheme was to detach from it the English and French ambassadors, cautious and prudent men who dread responsibility. I therefore assumed with them a high tone of surprise and indignation, and indicated that the counter-blast to this conspiracy upon the part of the United States would probably be an order to me to demand my passports immediately, as the scheme in contemplation was the most offensive violation of the Monroe Doctrine which had so far been conceived.

The effect of what I said had the desired effect [sic] and so alarmed these ambassadors that they at once communi-

⁷ U. S. State Department Archives.

cated such alarm to the Spanish Minister of State. The result was the prompt disclosure upon his part to me of all that had been done, coupled with the promise that he would suspend all action in the matter.

During the time which has since transpired, it has become more and more evident that this miscarriage of the scheme means its abandonment. The English Ambassador called upon me this morning for a general talk upon the subject, in the course of which he assured me that, if any attempt should be made to revive the scheme, he would express the opinion that such attempt was ridiculous.

Another and a more detailed account of how Taylor learned about the Memorandum appears in a long letter he wrote to Secretary of State Olney, some time prior to despatching his cable of August 13. This reads, in part: ^a

"It becomes my duty to report to you the facts of a recent occurrence of more than ordinary importance. Upon my arrival in San Sebastian, I was received by the Minister of State with unusual cordiality, and was entertained by him on several occasions. These civilities I returned promptly, and the evident good feeling between us was noted by the press as specially auspicious. Then came by telegram the announcement that the president had published a fresh neutrality proclamation, which was welcomed here by all classes, and the Minister of State called upon me to express his personal gratitude for this new manifestation of friendly feeling towards Spain upon the part of the President and yourself. You can then well imagine my surprise when I learned through a secret confidential source that, at that moment, the Minister of State was busily engaged in the completion of an identical note to be addressed exclusively to the European Powers, with the purpose of combining them in such united action against the United States as would guarantee to Spain absolute non-interference upon our part with the future course of events in Cuba in any possible contingency. At first I was incredulous, but little by little I discovered the whole story directly or indirectly through representatives of two of the great powers, who desired to prevent the consummation of the scheme. I have ascertained that the leading representatives of the great powers were all consulted before our departure from Madrid, and the Minister of State supposed that he had received universal approval, but after the publication of the Presi-

^a U. S. State Department Archives.

dent's recent proclamation, a difference of opinion arose, and the representatives of England and France were clearly of opinion that the identical note was thus deprived of its *raison d'être*, and that its issuance would give just offense to the Government of the United States, as an imputation upon the sincerity of its intentions. However, the Minister of State persevered in his purpose, and on Friday last, the 7th instant, the draft of the identical note was actually read to the ambassadors and ministers present here. On Saturday, the 8th, I received the first intimation of these proceedings, which were kept strictly secret from me. On that day the English ambassador, evidently apprehensive that a false and dangerous step was about to be taken, called upon me at my hotel for the ostensible purpose of talking generally about Cuban affairs. In the course of that conversation *he asked me what I knew about the preparation of this note*, and after I had indicated that I was aware of its existence, I was able to supplement my then imperfect information. I then obtained through a confidential friend, a statement from the French Ambassador of the contents of the note as read to him, which may be summarized as follows. . . ."

Taylor, it seems, did not wish to put on paper the name of his informant; as a result, he became a little confused and told slightly different stories in his several messages.

O'Donnell ought now to have abandoned his project. There were good and sufficient reasons for abandoning it in the change now discernible in the relations between the United States and England, in the conviction expressed by Drummond Wolff that Cleveland's proclamation dealing with America's neutrality was adequate, and all that could be expected of a nation compelled to watch, at its doorstep, a cruel war which was causing it material hurt. Wolff considered it ridiculous to suppose that O'Donnell would continue. Taylor also was positive the project would never be heard of again. But the Duke de Tetuán was of another mind.

Before his interview with Taylor, O'Donnell, in a telegraphic circular to his ambassadors, suspended delivery of the Memorandum. We shall see later how the Spanish Foreign Minister now executed what he thought

was a very clever manœuvre. He had promised Taylor that the Memorandum would not be delivered. It was not delivered. But O'Donnell succeeded, nevertheless, in getting its substance before the European chancelleries.

But "fortune does not always follow valor," and besides the task which O'Donnell faced was one not of diplomatic propaganda, but of initiating an important and dangerous action.

The interview at San Sebastian between the angry Taylor and the nonplussed O'Donnell was a dramatic one, and its importance was such that it deserves more than passing mention. Since neither of the two distinguished participants was master of the other's language, the services of an interpreter were called on. The person who acted in this capacity, Señor Alfonso Merry del Val, took copious notes of the conversation, and Taylor also, on leaving the Duke, hurried to his hotel, and wrote a report of the interview for the Department of State at Washington.

I prefer to follow the Spanish account of this conference, in which Taylor demonstrated high abilities as a diplomat, for the reason that it is much more detailed than the one written by Taylor, now in the archives of the Department of State at Washington.

In the Washington document, there appears one phrase that is missing from the report of Merry del Val. It states that Taylor told O'Donnell that, in essence, the Spanish action "was a secret attempt upon the part of Spain to so unite the European powers to her cause as to enable the combination thus made to dictate to the United States, and to control its action in reference to the politics of the New World, over which it claimed the right to exercise a supreme influence." These words, which could have been seized upon by Spain to her great advantage, are not in the detailed memorandum made by Merry del Val. Perhaps the explanation is that Mr. Taylor wished to repeat to the ears of Olney, the phrase which Olney himself had used in his instructions to Bayard in connection with the Venezuelan dispute. At all events, the extracts which follow from the notes of Merry del Val will give some idea of the dialectic duel fought by the two men:

The Minister of State: He began by saying that, on the previous day, the British Ambassador had informed him of a conversation he had held a few hours earlier with Mr. Taylor, and that, authorized by Mr. Wolff, he had felt it desirable to arrange for a direct interview. According to the British Ambassador, the Minister of the United States had been painfully embarrassed by learning through persons whom he did not name, of the existence of a project on the part of the Government of Spain for diplomatic action by the great powers. O'Donnell gave assurances immediately of his complete confidence in the honorable intentions of President Cleveland and Secretary Olney. He referred to the several preceding diplomatic steps that had been taken, and to the declarations of confidence which Spain had solemnly made about the present heads of the Government of the United States, in order thereby to show that it was not possible for him now to say anything to the contrary. If Mr. Taylor had heard anything to the contrary, his doubts would be dissipated on learning that the projected action could have nothing to do with the present Government of the United States, although, to be sure, it would have a relation to happenings of the future. He concluded by begging the Minister to consult with him in the future, and on all occasions, in order to avoid mistaken interpretations.

Mr. Taylor: He declared that he had suffered a painful impression on learning, casually and fragmentarily at first, and afterwards with more completeness, through inferences and information which came to him little by little, of the project of the Spanish government initiating an action with respect to the other great European Powers, dealing with the Cuban question. He stated emphatically that the news had made a very painful impression upon him, because he knew his government well enough to say solemnly that nothing else could inspire in it greater hostility against Spain.

The Minister of State: He replied that the matter had nothing to do with the Administration of President Cleveland. If Spain addressed herself to the European Powers, it was because of a fear of future political changes which might take place in the United States. Further, he cited several examples of negotiations with certain powers, which had been carried on without recriminations by powers not included. This very thing, he said, the United States had done in 1876, addressing itself to the Great Powers with

respect to the Cuban question, without saying anything to Spain. Spain at that time had not taken offense.

Mr. Taylor: He stressed the disastrous effects which news of the projected diplomatic action would produce in his country. He explained that the ambassadors of the Great Powers were hardly less disturbed than he, at the prospect of the certain consequences which would result from the step which the Spanish Government was taking.

The Minister of State: He declared that the foreign ambassadors had expressed no such views to him, but that there must be some error, as he could not doubt the accuracy of Mr. Taylor's statements. He said that the representatives of Spain had not consulted directly with the other governments, but that, in conferences held in Madrid, various ambassadors had assured him, with absolute unanimity, that whatever action Spain proposed to take with respect to the project, would be viewed with the greatest consideration by their governments. The British Ambassador only, who had, up to then, been completely in accord with his confrères, had spoken to him the day previous, that is, the 9th of August, to the same effect as Mr. Taylor.

Mr. Taylor: He amplified his assertions with respect to the ambassadors, and observed that, on the part of some of these, there might be an attempt at deceit.⁹ He renewed his solemn assurances as to the extremely grave consequences which would follow Spain's enlistment of the cooperation of Europe with respect to the American question, without taking into account the United States or any other American power, since any European intervention in American affairs was bound to be offensive to the United States. He requested the Minister to reconsider, and asked for a statement as to whether the step resolved upon by the Spanish Government was irrevocable.

The Minister of State: He declared that no document whatsoever had been delivered: consequently that all complaints were premature. He insisted that the action of Spain had not been directed against the government of President Cleveland, but against possible future contingencies arising from a change of administrations. He pointed out that when, in 1843, it was feared that England intended capturing Cuba, the United States lost no time in counselling Spain to appeal to France, with the object of upsetting plans objectionable to the United States.

⁹ In Merry del Val's notes no name is mentioned, but in the letter O'Donnell sent to Cánovas, to which reference has already been made, there is a direct allusion to the ambassadors of England and France.

Mr. Taylor: He declared that neither his government nor any American would distinguish between the present and the future; that what was in question were the interests of the Republic before the world, and it was not feasible to consider a possible future change of administrations.¹⁰ The Spanish project, he added, inspired in him the same grave alarm, as in the resident ambassadors of Great Britain and France.

The Minister of State: He spoke at length of the duties of the Spanish Government, in the event that the Cuban insurrection continued until after the 4th of March, when a new President of the United States, following different policies, might bring about the suspension of friendly relations, and even war. The problem, under these circumstances, might affect not only Spain but other nations. Thus he felt obligated to give warning to the Great Powers in advance.

Mr. Taylor: He expressed his conviction that none of the Great Powers was disposed to give to Spain effective cooperation. On the other hand, the United States would take offense at any action by the great powers, whatever it might be. He again asked if it was still possible to suspend action.

The Minister of State: He replied that up to now no document whatever had been presented to the Powers, and he offered his assurance that none would be delivered without advising Mr. Taylor beforehand. He then reverted to the possible change of administration in the United States, and the necessity which Spain was under of clarifying and defining her position in Europe.

Mr. Taylor: He did not seek to avoid the question about the change of administration in his country, and the possibility of disagreeable consequences arising therefrom for Spain. He said that according to private advices which he had received, Bryan was certain to be elected President, in which case Morgan would be Secretary of State, and that

¹⁰ It seems strange that O'Donnell should have differentiated so strongly between the attitudes of the existing and possible future administrations in the United States in this conversation as to give occasion for this keen observation by the representative of the United States. But it may be said to O'Donnell's credit that, on other occasions, Taylor himself made this distinction, with the object to be sure, of exerting pressure on the Minister, and securing an amicable solution of the Cuban struggle before President Cleveland's term ended. In the diplomacy of the United States, there is much of the personal element; more is said in the name of the President, than in that of the state or the administration. Those who do not know this fall into the same error as O'Donnell.

both were the worst enemies of Spain. He argued strongly that Spain ought to take advantage of the time which remained to her while Cleveland and Olney were in power, in order to combine military action with a political effort to overcome the Cuban revolution. He repeated that he was speaking as a sincere friend of Spain, and urged the Duke de Tetuán to take everything that he had said into serious consideration before taking any irrevocable step. He did not know, he said, what he could do to convince the Duke de Tetuán of his own convictions, and of the dangers he foresaw if the project under consideration were not dropped.

The Minister of State: He stated that he, unhappily, agreed with Mr. Taylor concerning the dangers which threatened the Island of Cuba. He said that Spain might smother the insurrection with her own resources, but that the solution of the difficulty was not in Havana, but in Washington. He added that, foreseeing that affairs in Cuba would not change prior to the 4th of March, he had felt that he should begin the action under discussion, because negotiations with foreign governments are always slow moving. He said, finally, that he would consult with the President of the Council of Ministers concerning the matter, and he repeated his offer not to allow the document to be delivered without advising Mr. Taylor in advance.

Mr. Taylor: He stated that, even under the worst conditions, it was to Spain's advantage not to hurry events, but to await the success of her own campaign in Cuba, intensified by the despatch of new troops. He added that, in view of what the Minister had said, he would not telegraph to Washington, although he could not fail to make a report to his superiors by letter, which, however, he would do in a brief and not alarming manner, so that all possibility of danger would be obviated. Both agreed to inform the ambassadors of England and France, who were anxiously awaiting information, of the general terms of the conversation.

Mr. Taylor then withdrew, believing that the interview, which had lasted two hours, had accomplished very encouraging results.

The following day, the American Minister again called on the Duke de Tetuán, to inform him that a journalist had left for the frontier to cable a report of the incident to his newspaper. The two then agreed to cable accounts of what had taken place, the Minister to his Government

at Washington, the Duke to the Spanish envoy at Washington, in order that both should get their information direct and not through the newspapers.

The Washington Department of State warmly congratulated Mr. Taylor on his work, congratulations which were well deserved. In Joseph de Maistre's phrase, in diplomacy "all is mystery and nothing is secret," but in the incident under discussion, it is not so much a case of praising Taylor for finding out what was going on, as it is for his rapid action and the firm though not offensive way in which he conducted himself. Thanks to Taylor, the Washington Government learned of the Spanish project at the same time that it was nullified. A spirit less balanced than Taylor's could have provoked a whole flock of difficulties, out of which he might have won an ephemeral fame. A diplomat must never forget that he is first of all a messenger of peace, and that his labor is all the more beneficial when it is done without ostentation.

Señor Cánovas del Castillo, President of the Spanish Council of Ministers, made an effort to conceal not only the diplomatic failure of the Memorandum, but the very existence of the document itself. To an interrogation in the Cortes, he replied saying that no document of any sort had been read to the foreign Ambassadors at Madrid, and he also gave a very inaccurate account of the interview between O'Donnell and Taylor. Taylor sent a copy of Cánovas's statement to Washington, adding the comment: ¹¹

"After three years' experience of Spanish statesmen and diplomatists, the foregoing from the first statesman in the country was something for which I was not prepared. I felt it my duty to let you know the real character of the people with whom you have to deal. The motive which explains this extraordinary conduct, was twofold. In the first place Sr. Cánovas felt it necessary to convince you that he had not been intriguing against the U. S., even after the issuance

¹¹ U. S. Department of State. August 18, 1896.

of the President's recent proclamation. In the second place, he found it necessary for the preservation of his prestige in Spain, to convince the Cortes that he had not desisted from his purpose of issuing the identical note by reason of pressure applied by the representative of the United States."

Minister Taylor's last months at Madrid were very trying. Public feeling against the entire American mission was strong and was freely displayed. Threats were made daily against the secretaries and the rest of the legation personnel; and the Minister, his family, and his home, had to be guarded by soldiers. The diplomatic career of this brilliant functionary was brought to an end by the change of administration at Washington in 1897. Thereafter he devoted himself once again to his profession as an educator. Before leaving Madrid, he paid a tribute of gratitude to one of his colleagues, the only one apparently who had, in his difficult hours, stood by him. In a personal letter to Olney on February 4, 1897, he wrote:

"When popular excitement was at its highest, few had the courage to remain by my side, and the representatives of foreign nations which are considered our friends, were not an exception to this condition. . . . Now that my mission is coming to an end, I feel that I ought not to fail to call your attention to the courageous attitude of the German Ambassador, Herr Radovitz, during the days when it was feared that the lives of myself and my family were in danger. In those moments when very few of my colleagues dared so much as to leave their cards, Mr. Radovitz came to my house with his wife, passing through the guards to offer his embassy to me as a refuge until the danger had passed."¹²

Taylor did not accept Radovitz's offer but remained at his post, courageously facing the danger. The diplomatic representative fills the role of outpost. Upon him depends the honor of his nation. If, in normal times, he must know how to be a man of the salon and of the cabinet, he must also, in times of stress, be able to show indifference to everything, even the safety of himself and his loved ones, for the sake of his country's dignity.

¹² U. S. State Department Archives.

CHAPTER IV

A DIPLOMATIC REVERSE

THE Taylor-O'Donnell conversation gave a new direction to the effort of Cánovas' government to bring into being a European bloc. It had now become necessary to live up to the promise made to Taylor, that the Memorandum would not be delivered to the powers. That promise the Spanish Ministers intended to keep. They were, at the same time, determined that the labor spent on the Memorandum should not be lost; somehow or other they intended the Memorandum to do the work for which it had been designed.

Mr. Taylor's knowledge of the affair had thrown matters into confusion, but had not destroyed the hopes of the Spaniards. The Powers were now informed about the Spanish project; they knew, among other things, that it was connected with the monarchical principle in Europe. What remained for Madrid to do, was to get the attention of the Powers turned to the objective of the Memorandum. To bring this about, O'Donnell, in his letter to Cánovas of August 11, had asked permission to proceed with his project, modifying it to meet changed conditions. In support of his request, O'Donnell wrote:

"The Great Powers cannot deny that they know of our project and our aspirations, and since all of them will probably approve the course we have followed, they will automatically be associated with us by implication in the responsibility."¹

Thus the Duke de Tetuán began again with everbrimming optimism to manœuvre Europe into a bloc to aid Spain. In a word, O'Donnell's hopes for successful

¹ Spanish Archives. Docket 35. Confidential to Lenovas del Castillo August 11 of 1896.

results from the Memorandum, and his decision to carry on with it, had been in no degree affected by Taylor's learning of the intrigue, or by the fact, which he mentioned in his letter to Cánovas, that the French and British Ambassadors had withdrawn their support.

Cánovas replied to O'Donnell, giving him the permission requested, but limiting to some extent the range of his action. "You may take the position," he wrote, "that the document is in the hands of our representatives in the character merely of instructions, and that its sole purpose is to define Spain's situation with respect to Cuba when such definition is called for. But the document itself is not to be read to anyone nor a copy of it given to anyone."² But O'Donnell, in a telegram of instructions to the Spanish Ambassadors abroad, after explaining that the envoys of the great Powers at Madrid had given their encouragement and approval to the Memorandum, went on to say, "Explain [to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs] verbally, as information merely, the principles, data, and objectives of the Memorandum, and try to direct the conversation in such a way that, without Your Excellency's asking their opinion, you get them to state what their attitude is, with respect both to the project itself and to the decision of the Spanish Government not to proceed with it because of the inopportune phase into which the matter has recently entered."³

The task of the Spanish chancellery in this second stage of the intrigue was a dual one. In the first place, Spain had to abide by the promise O'Donnell had made to Taylor; otherwise, there would have been repercussions throughout Europe not helpful to the Spanish cause. In the second place, Spain must get the contents of the Memorandum to the attention of the European ministries, but without formally presenting it. Only thus could progress be made towards bringing a European bloc into being. The Spanish ministers were by this time completely convinced that Spain's interests could only be defended by a coalition which should be in exist-

² Spanish Archives. Docket 35. Telegram dated August 13, 1896.

³ Code despatch. San Sebastian, August 14, 1896. Spanish Archives. Docket 35.

ence and prepared to act, when the new American President was inaugurated on March 4, 1897.

It was not important at this stage whether the Memorandum was delivered or not. What was of importance was to establish the principle that, though the question at issue was an American question, it was also a matter of serious concern to Europe. Because the United States had learned of O'Donnell's project, and because knowledge of the Memorandum was now in the possession of the Great Powers, the situation, though more difficult for Spain because she would have to act under the vigilant watchfulness of the United States, was actually simplified, since all the parties interested were now fully informed about it. But it was not enough for Spain to try to make the Cuban question a European question; the paramount need for Spain was, first, to get all the powers to approve Spain's course, and then get them to agree on a common action.

It is certain that the ambassadors at Madrid had earlier given encouragement to O'Donnell. To anyone knowing the diplomacy of Spain, the sincerity of declarations made in confidential documents addressed to high officers of the government, cannot be doubted. But it is no less true that O'Donnell, confiding so strongly in the efficacy of his plan, had become hopelessly confused. The fact that it had become impossible to put down the Cuban rebellion, and the further fact that a nation of such power as the United States was, under continuing and energetic pressure of public opinion, disposed to intervene on the side of the rebels, had the effect of confusing the mind of the optimistic Minister of Foreign Affairs. It must be conceded, in O'Donnell's defense, that the task of organizing a coalition of the Great Powers, which were constantly functioning as the dominating force of the world, seemed entirely realizable. And to O'Donnell the enthusiastic approval of the Memorandum which had been shown by the foreign envoys at Madrid must have been extremely encouraging.

Furthermore, the survival of the Spanish monarchy, while it caused the Madrid cabinet great anxiety, because of the general conviction that the loss of Cuba would mean the fall of the monarchy, was also a helpful factor.

How, for example, could the Emperor of Austria-Hungary refuse aid to the reigning Queen of Spain, a woman of his own blood? Was it conceivable that the Czar of Russia, the Kaiser of Germany, the Queen of England, King Victor Emanuel of Italy, would permit the Spanish throne to fall? Could they afford to be indifferent to the possibility of the most traditionalistic of the nations of Europe being converted into a republic?

We shall see, in due course, that the reasoning of the Madrid Government was sound, and that for a time in 1898 the monarchical principle seemed likely to influence the Great Powers to take effective action.

Drummond Wolff himself, who was responsible in one way or another for the abortive ending of the Spanish plan in 1896, made this comment years afterwards in his memoirs on the situation of the Spanish Queen:

"The times were very troublous. There was war in Morocco, and shortly afterwards the Cuban insurrection broke out. Both these events were dangerous—not only to Spain, but to the dynasty. I may say, perhaps, that all the representatives of foreign countries at Madrid sought for the best means of securing the success of the Queen Regent. . . . England was popularly supposed not to have sufficiently supported that country in the contest with the United States. Though I never experienced any act of discourtesy or unfriendliness, I felt that there was a tone of coldness which had not existed before." ⁴

But enough of the illusions that filled the mind of the Spanish Foreign Minister, to the exclusion of all realistic thought about the situation with which Spain was faced. Let us turn to other matters, and to events now hurrying on apace.

At Berlin, the Spanish Ambassador, Mendez Vigo, telegraphed his home government on August 16, that he had complied with the order to suspend delivery of the Memorandum. He also gave an account of a conversation he had had with the German Minister of Foreign Relations, in which he had explained the history of the

⁴ "Rambling Recollections," Henry Drummond Wolff. Macmillan & Co., Ltd., London. 1908. Two volumes. Vol. II. Pages 402 and 405.

Memorandum, and described its contents and purposes. Baron von Marschall, Mendez Vigo related, had listened to him attentively; had interrupted him to say, "Certainly!" when he spoke of the Kaiser's interest in and goodwill for Spain; had remarked that the Spanish Government had done well in preparing the Memorandum, and afterwards in suspending its delivery.

On August 18, O'Donnell received from Mendez Vigo a letter containing a full account of his conversation with von Marschall. This contained little information beyond his telegram, except that it made it clear that von Marschall, in his rejoinders to the leading remarks of the Ambassador, kept safely within the field of the general. The closest thing to a positive statement that Mendez Vigo could report was: "I had the satisfaction of hearing the Minister repeat to me the same assurances which the Emperor of Germany gave Your Excellency, with respect to the interest which everything having to do with Spain and to Her Majesty the Queen Regent, inspires in His Highness the Emperor and in this Government." ⁵

The Spanish ambassadors to the Great Powers, not having been consulted in the preparation of the Memorandum, saw it for the first time when it was carried to them by courier. In letters to O'Donnell at Madrid, they all praised it; but one and all were of the opinion that it ought to be withdrawn. The Spanish Ambassador to Rome, Count de Benomar, reported to O'Donnell that the Italian Foreign Minister, Marquis Visconti Venosta, had said to him that the document should be withdrawn, and added his own opinion that the same advice would be given by all other governments interested. ⁶

The Duke de Mandas, at Paris, following a conference with Hanotaux, French Minister of Foreign Affairs, wrote O'Donnell: "Your Excellency will doubtless remember that I have repeatedly stated my conviction that we should find in France, as we have found, the support of public opinion and of the stock exchange, but that the help we could expect from the French Gov-

⁵ Spanish Archives. Docket 35.

⁶ Spanish Archives. Docket 35.

ernment would be very small, because of France's own difficulties with her colonies, her present situation, and the care she must exercise with respect to her numerous and complex relations with various nations, not the least delicate of which are her relations with nations friendly to the United States."⁷

In the interview de Mandas had with Hanotaux, the latter began by saying that he was not aware that Spain had prepared a document for delivery to the Great Powers, and he explained this amazing lack of knowledge as being due to the illness of the French Ambassador to Madrid, the Marquis de Reverseaux. The Duke de Mandas, unwilling to accept this bland pretense of ignorance on the part of the able though youthful French Minister, recalled to him specific occurrences which could not be made to harmonize with the pose Hanotaux had assumed. But Hanotaux persevered in his disavowals, and in touching ever so lightly on the topic of the participation which France's envoy to Madrid may have had in the affair, he remarked that "perhaps the very persons who wished to strengthen the document before, are those who now wish that it will not be sent."⁸ Whereupon, with some abruptness, Hanotaux terminated the interview with an "Enfin, c'est un incident clos."

Gabriel Hanotaux was a young and brilliant minister, an earnest student, cultivated in mind, and already famous as one of France's most distinguished writers on politics and history. In a duel of wits between him and the Duke de Mandas, the Duke was hopelessly outclassed. Hanotaux, assuredly informed of the attitude which Minister Taylor had taken, was determined to erase every vestige of France's early participation in the preparation of the Memorandum. That this would be the course Hanotaux would take, should have been foreseen by the Duke de Mandas, and he ought, in consequence, to have stressed the future and not the past, in his fencing with the Frenchman.

In Vienna, the situation was no better. Despite the interest which Franz-Josef and his Government felt in Spain's Queen, the wish to consider the "incident as

⁷ Spanish Archives. Docket 35. Document 280.

⁸ Spanish Archives. Docket 35. Document 280.

ended," prevailed at the Austrian court. As if by agreement among themselves, the Powers seemed bent on wiping out even the memory of what had happened at Madrid, and thereby forestalling any possible consequences to what they now regarded as a premature and false step. The French Ambassador at Vienna, in a talk with his Spanish colleague, the Marquis de Hoyos, said to him, with suspicious amiability, that Lord Salisbury had exchanged telegrams about the Memorandum with Goluchowski. When the Marquis de Hoyos talked with Count Goluchowski, he explained with a wealth of details the contents and purposes of the Memorandum, and he did his best to jolt the Austrian into expressing some sort of an opinion. All in vain. His every appeal to friendship, and his every resort to diplomatic wiles, were unavailing. The Count would say only that he was very much interested in what had been told him; but as for opinions, he had none to give.⁹ Count Goluchowski, as I have remarked, was a diplomat of the old school, a great gentleman, amiable, always in command of himself, but lacking perhaps in keenness of understanding. For many years he had been Franz-Josef's minister, enjoying the Emperor's confidence, and at all times obeying him implicitly.

A telegram in the archives of the Foreign Ministry at Madrid sent in late August, 1896, by the Spanish Ambassador at St. Petersburg, reveals a strange outcome to the interview which the Count de Villagonzalo had with Foreign Minister Lobanoff concerning the Memorandum. In reading the report which follows, made, after the interview, by Villagonzalo to O'Donnell, one must bear in mind the instructions which O'Donnell had sent to all his ambassadors concerning the finesse they must exercise in getting the substance of the Memorandum to the attention of foreign governments.

"Prince Lobanoff warmly congratulated me on the effect which the proclamation of neutrality of the President of the United States would have, and he strongly approved the decision of Your Excellency not to cause, in the light of this proclamation, the Great Powers to intervene between

⁹ Spanish Archives. Docket 35. Document 67.

Spain and the United States. He said that such an intervention, coming after the proof of friendship given by President Cleveland, would hurt the feelings of the American people, and have consequences the opposite of those hoped for. He said, further, that as soon as he had read the proclamation, he had, like Your Excellency, believed it advisable to abandon for the time being the presentation of the Memorandum. He assured me that His Majesty the Emperor and his Government felt sympathy for Spain, and that they were watching with keen interest the efforts of the Spanish Government to overcome the difficulties lying in the way of the prompt pacification of the Island of Cuba." ¹⁰

These words which the far-off ambassador, unaware of O'Donnell's real purposes, wrote to the Spanish Foreign Minister, reveal the small capacity which the Count de Villagonzalo had; to the Duke de Tetuán they must have had the ring of an exquisite sarcasm. Lobanoff's comment on the Spanish effort to have the document delivered actually, if not formally, was to say that Spain had done well in not delivering it! And in the same breath he declared that he and the Madrid Government were in complete agreement. . . .

The amiable tone of the Russian Minister's remarks might have been due either to the innate kindness of the Slav, or to blundering on the part of the Spanish Ambassador. This person, one judges, after reading his report to Madrid in its entirety, seems to have believed that the withdrawal of the Memorandum was a voluntary act not imposed by circumstances, and that the proclamation of President Cleveland had left Spain completely satisfied, and with her problem definitely solved. It is curious that the Count de Villagonzalo should have believed this. However, it must be remembered that to him had been assigned the extremely difficult and delicate task, on presenting the contents of the Memorandum to the Russian Foreign Office, and of persuading the Russian Government to head the projected European coalition. In the 1890's, a Spanish Ambassador to Russia had to be above everything else a rich grandee, able to maintain the prestige of his country on a high plane at the Russian court and in Russian society. That, and

¹⁰ Spanish Archives. Docket 35. Document 53.

nothing more. Now, unexpectedly, there had arisen the necessity for an extremely important diplomatic action. For poor Count de Villagonzalo, the decision not to deliver the Memorandum must have seemed nothing short of providential deliverance.

At London, the British Government took matters with its customary calmness. Lord Salisbury, after exchanging telegrams about the Memorandum with Goluchowski and with the other European chancelleries, went to Dorn without granting an interview to the Spanish Ambassador. At Dorn, where he remained a week, Salisbury took possession with great pomp and ceremony of the post of "Lord Warden of the Five Ports." While he was absent from London, the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Lord Sanderson, showed no haste in communicating to his chief that the Ambassador of Spain was anxious to see him.

All through the month of September, 1896, and on into October, the Duke de Tetuán waited before finally and regretfully deciding to sacrifice on the altar of necessity the note which he had written with such great care, had shrouded in such secrecy, and had built such hopes on the results. He made his final decision on October 10th, on which day he sent a new Royal Order to his ambassadors, which closed the incident. In this Royal Order, the Spanish Minister reviewed past events, and stated once more the reasons which had led to the preparation of the Memorandum, to advise the Great Powers of developments in the Cuban question, especially of the influence of the attitude of the United States on the insurrection. He pointed out once more that the document had been previously discussed, in confidence, with all the ambassadors at Madrid, who had urged its presentation, and that it had received from them not only approbation but praise. He mentioned that, when everything was ready, President Cleveland had issued a new neutrality proclamation, which produced a change of attitude on the part of several ambassadors, particularly the British Ambassador, who thought it inadvisable to go on with the project in the light of the energetic atti-

tude assumed by the American Minister to Madrid. With undiminished optimism, the Minister of Foreign Affairs declared his purpose achieved: the United States would feel compelled, in future, to be more severe towards the filibustering expeditions organized in its territory; while Europe had shown unmistakable interest in the Cuban question, and a conviction of its own stake in it. He concluded with stating:

"All the governments [of the Great Powers] have indicated that their respective envoys have kept them continuously informed, and none of them has disavowed the opinions or the confidential collaboration given by their envoys. They have expressed their good will towards Spain, and they have approved our decision not to proceed, in the present circumstances, to deliver the Memorandum, though applauding its manner and matter. Having secured the moral effect of an appeal to Europe, and the appeal having met with a friendly welcome, the negotiations are now on such a basis that, in case future events make it desirable for the Government of Her Catholic Majesty to renew them, we can do so quickly and effectively."¹¹

In this curious defense of his effort with the Memorandum, O'Donnell failed to mention a number of matters discussed in earlier letters to the ambassadors. Nowhere in the Royal Order did he allude to the vigorous attitude assumed by Taylor as the real reason for the withdrawal of the Memorandum. He treated the renunciation as a voluntary act, whereas all the known facts indicate the contrary.

O'Donnell, in his official letters, as when he wrote Cánovas, and also when he wrote to the ambassadors of Spain to the Great Powers, did not hide his irritation against the informer of the Minister of the United States. He revealed his anger finally many years later in a written defense of his career in office, which was, subsequent to his death, published by his son.

"The truth should have been evident to the Ministers, and to their president, Sagasta, at that time, 1898, because apart

¹¹ Spanish Archives. Docket 35. Royal Order of October 10, 1896, sent to the ambassadors in Paris, Berlin, St. Petersburg, Rome, London, and Vienna, and transmitted also to the Spanish Ambassador at Washington.

from the incident of my conference with Mr. Taylor in August, 1896, (to which I will advert later), the Conservative Government left in the Ministry of State sufficient data to have dispelled all illusions. Cánovas' Ministry, which has been so unjustly and intemperately censured, busied itself, from the time it went into office in 1895, in securing for Spain advance commitments from the Powers for a cooperation which should be neither platonic nor fantastic, but strong, positive, and effective, and which would defend Spain's rights and her sovereignty over Cuba against all external aggression, in the event of a rupture of relations with the United States. We offered in exchange the aid of Spain in connection with certain continental European interests. In spite of all we could do, we were not successful: our proposals could make no headway against the fear which the Powers felt that, by committing themselves, they would endanger the future peace of Europe—a reason which other friendly governments considered as not really affecting directly, nor to a sufficient degree, the nations we appealed to."¹²

Whatever Spain's hopes may have been; whatever the alliances offered to the Powers by the Spanish Foreign Minister; whatever O'Donnell's views and opinions, his program turned out to be impracticable. In the situation of the Great Powers at the time, they could not consider Spain's desire that a European coalition be organized to deal with the Cuban question, as one in which Europe had a legitimate interest, not in harmony with the interests of the United States.

In foreign affairs during the late 1890's, all the European chancelleries were practising what has been called the "higher politics"; that is, politics which takes into account, in everything it does, all of the interests of a state, everything not tending to aid the general situation being eliminated. The interests of the Great Powers were vast and complicated. America was, to a greater or less degree, excluded from the council table—the Monroe Doctrine had been an effective preventative against America's playing a part in the continuing activity of conquest, of apportioning spheres of influence, and of negotiated com-

¹² "Apuntes del ex-Ministro de Estado Duque de Tetuán." Pages 292-3.

pensations. And the Powers themselves needed all their faculties for the problems incident to their interests in the continents of Asia and Africa. To take on more responsibilities and entanglements would have been impracticable.

Following Japan's victory over China in 1894, and the ensuing Treaty of Shimonoseki, the Powers had prevented Japan's retention of the peninsula of Liao-Tung for the reason, as stated in a joint note of four of the greatest, that occupation by Japan of continental Chinese territory would constitute "a threat against the independence of North China and against an enduring peace." These Powers had begun a systematic occupation of the Chinese coast. Russia, under pretext of an alliance concluded with Li-Hung-Chang, received the concession of the Manchurian Railroad, together with attached rights, and, somewhat later, Port Arthur. Germany occupied Kiao-Tchen Bay, and secured a railroad concession in Chan-Tung. England occupied the port of Wei-Hai-Wei. France "rectified" the China-Annam borders. Capping all these, were a series of concessions of various kinds, including loans and franchises, a kind of harmony being maintained as the result of arrangements made "*à posteriori*," which, before being concluded, were mostly provocative of tense situations, and the exchange of strong notes, to the alarm of the world generally.

In Africa, the situation was even worse. As the two colonial empires of France and England expanded, they collided. There were times when Sir Edward Grey, Under Secretary of State for Great Britain, talked about war. Leopold II, King of the Belgians, a man of great shrewdness, tried to get Lord Salisbury to cede to him certain territory which, had he succeeded in getting it, he would have sold to France. In a letter to Queen Victoria, Salisbury explains how he balked the King: "I have never given him a direct reply, telling him only that the matters he spoke about were very interesting. For the most part we were simply being pleasant to each other."¹³

These struggles over colonies had repercussions in world politics, and became linked with questions in con-

¹³ "Letters of Queen Victoria," Vol. II, p. 579.

tinental Europe, and the many historic causes for conflict always latent there. As a consequence, ministers had, at all times, in dealing with them, to be extremely careful in their actions; they had to be either extraordinarily cautious or startlingly audacious, according to circumstances. Any one who studies the situation of Talleyrand at the Congress of Vienna, 1814-1815, and that of Disraeli at the Conference of Berlin, 1878, more than half a century later, will realize that European diplomacy of the second half of the nineteenth century had to contend with difficulties infinitely greater than those of the early half. At Vienna, Talleyrand's first preoccupation was to preserve his prestige. At Berlin, according to Disraeli, "the great result, as well as one of the main objects, . . . was to break up, and permanently prevent, the alliance of the three Empires; . . . *it was realized by personal influence alone*, both by Andrassy and Bismarck."¹⁴

In the nineties all questions in the international field were extremely complicated. The European concert was still alive, though its efficiency was under attack; just as there is, today, criticism of the efficiency of the League of Nations. Daily the concert acted, or prudently refrained from acting; but whatever it did, its actions and its abstentions from action fell always within the enormous confusion caused by the conflict of interests. The absolute dominance which Bismarck exercised over Europe, had come to an end in 1890, and thereafter there existed the Triple Alliance, working more or less openly, and the Dual Alliance, still at this time secret, not avowed till 1897, and then not in its true character.

In dealing with questions of a general nature, the Allied Powers aided each other, so far as their complicated European and foreign interests permitted. Negotiation was the order of the day.

England, aloof from the two alliances, and obliged at all times to keep world interests in balance, played an even shrewder political game. Britain's "splendid isolation" caused her statesmen more mental effort than could all the alliances combined, for they were never able to count, in

¹⁴ Letter from Disraeli to Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, November 4, 1880. "Randon Recollections," Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, Vol. II, p. 265.

a crisis, on the positive support of any of the Powers; all of their successes had to be won by the prestige and might of Britain, or by their own skill in taking advantage of rivalries among other nations. Theoretically, isolation would seem a policy easy to follow; practically, it is very difficult and trying.

In an international world so constituted, and with equilibrium so precariously maintained, it was hard to effect group action. It is true that, as respects Spain in her difficulties over Cuba, all the monarchs of Europe, with the Supreme Pontiff at their head, were in favor of joint action. These monarchs were constantly interposing in affairs of state, especially foreign affairs. To cite one instance: Queen Victoria made an energetic, if discreet and circumspect, effort to secure the post of British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs for a man she liked, and with whom she could work in harmony. But at the side of the monarchs, except in the case of Russia, were ministers who were more or less responsible, and, even more important, parliament, press, and public opinion.

The fickleness and impulsiveness of the monarchs, gave their Ministers of Foreign Affairs a great deal of trouble, as is made clear by von Bulow in his "Memoirs," and by Rosebery, as quoted in "The Letters of Queen Victoria." Sometimes the ministers varied slightly their predetermined courses of action, in order to humor their sovereign, afterwards retracing their steps.

The Memorandum of the Duke de Tetuán, despite support given it by the monarchs, was foredoomed to failure. Russia and England could not, in the existing confused international situation, have afforded to put the friendship of the United States in the same balance with that of Spain. These two nations, one the most autocratic of Europe and the other the most liberal, were agreed that the new power arising on the other side of the Atlantic could be more useful to them than Spain, even though Spain had but shortly before revealed unexpected strength in sending a great army to a distant battlefield in Cuba. One day Asia and Europe would call on the power of the United States to aid in the settlement of difficult problems. That the European statesmen of the 1890's sensed that this might happen reveals their wise and penetrating foresight.

CHAPTER V

THE UNITED STATES TENDERS ITS GOOD OFFICES

THE curtain was raised on the second act of this great international drama by a proffer made by the United States to Spain of its good offices in restoring peace between Spain and Cuba.

In the city of San Sebastian, at 5 o'clock on the afternoon of September 18, 1897, General S. L. Woodford, who had succeeded Hannis Taylor as American Minister to the Government of Her Catholic Majesty, initiated an important conference with the Spanish Foreign Minister, the Duke de Tetuán. Following the usual phrases of courtesy never omitted by good diplomats—but sometimes by the mediocre, when matters are serious, in the erroneous belief that the force of their action is thereby intensified—the American Minister asked O'Donnell's permission to read him a paper he had with him.

The nature of this paper was not made clear, so that O'Donnell, who had no wish to provoke definitive declarations, was unable to judge whether he was listening to the reading of a formal note, a summary of a verbal communication, or merely a memorandum prepared by the American Minister in relation to the matters which had inspired his visit to the Spanish Minister.¹

Whatever may have been the form chosen by the American Government for transmitting its views to the Spanish Government, the substantial fact about the conference was that General Woodford gave a resumé in broad strokes of the Cuban revolution since its inception in 1895. He said that the Cubans had revolted for the purpose of winning greater liberty; that Spain had re-

¹ Spanish Archives. Docket 37.

sponded energetically to the challenge, with a lavish outpouring of money and men; that the United States, because of her proximity to Cuba, of her commerce, and of the serious injuries she had suffered as a result of the struggle, could not close her eyes to the gravity of the situation. Because of the damage the war had caused American interests, continued General Woodford, and because the people of the United States felt outraged over the violent happenings in Cuba, the American Congress had voted a joint resolution recognizing the belligerency of the Cubans. Nevertheless, stated the document from which General Woodford read, the President of the United States, William McKinley, who by the success of the Republican Party in the elections of November, 1896, had succeeded Grover Cleveland in the Presidency, earnestly wished to maintain with Spain the same traditional and enduring peace which had always existed between the two countries. President McKinley was not forgetful of the ancient bonds of friendship between Spain and the United States, but felt compelled, under continuing and strong pressure of public opinion, to address himself to Spain, for the purpose of working out with the Government of Her Catholic Majesty a solution of the Cuban trouble, which would be honorable both to Spain and Cuba, and just to the United States.

The document then went on to declare that the United States was not interested in the political status of Cuba, but that the only matters to which the American Government gave its attention were (1) how to bring about peace and (2) the seeming inability of Spain to reestablish order. Concluding, the document made an offer of the good offices of the United States Government in bringing to an end the rebellion, now in its third year.

In statements which he made following the reading of the document, General Woodford explained that he wished to make it clear that "This government had no intention of annexing the Island of Cuba, nor did it aspire to the responsibilities of a protectorate."²

The Duke de Tetuán, in reply, spoke confidentially about several aspects of the Cuban trouble, and mentioned, to prove his good feeling towards Cuba, his blood

² Spanish Archives. Docket 37.

relationship with several Cuban families. He requested that he be permitted to delay replying to the offer of good offices.

At 7:45 P.M. the interview ended.

In informing the President of the Council of Ministers and the other members of the Spanish Cabinet of what had taken place, the Duke de Tetuán stated that the document read by the Minister of the United States "is distinguished for the studied and even meticulous courtesy of its tone, and for the care with which it seeks to avoid, not alone words, but even concepts which might be offensive, or which might wound the most delicate susceptibility, he having observed that only once, and this at the end of the document, and following upon a thousand excuses, allusion is made directly to the 'good offices,' the real object of the American proposal."³

The words and the ideas exchanged during the conversation indicate that the Duke de Tetuán no longer felt the repugnance towards the good offices of the United States, that he had shown the year before. The Duke no longer carried with aplomb the heavy load bearing down his shoulders. His blithe optimism had disappeared.

There was a tragic reason for this change. The Conservative Government headed by Cánovas, of which the Duke had been a member, was about to go out of office, to be succeeded by the Liberals under Sagasta. Cánovas, the strong man of Spain, the man whose will alone had sustained the Conservatives in power, was no more. Cánovas, who had clung always to the principle of resistance to the United States (though he is now represented as having been disposed to conciliation),⁴ had been assassinated on the eighth of August, 1896, at Santa Agueda, a small spa in the Basque Provinces. The assassin was an Italian anarchist named Michele Angiolillo, who believed that, by his act, he was avenging the sufferings of the Cubans, and of the prisoners of Montjuich who, according to newspaper accounts, had been subjected to frequent torture.

With the death of Cánovas, the soul of the Conserva-

³ Spanish Archives. Docket 37.

⁴ "Cánovas o El Hombre de Estado," Marques de Lema. P. 249.

tive Cabinet, and the great political mind of Spain, confusion reigned. O'Donnell, himself, was, a few days after his conversation with Woodford, forced to give up his portfolio.

The Liberal Government of Sagasta, which succeeded that of the Conservative, Cánovas, on October 20, 1897, declined the United States Government's proffer of its good offices. Again Spain turned to the European Powers, again tried to organize a European coalition to compel the United States to withdraw from the Cuban situation.

The Spanish Governments of 1897, both Conservative and Liberal, were something less than shrewd in the attitudes they took towards both the United States and Europe; in the present instance they both followed a course so deplorable that no defense can be made of it. Still another fact is that the work of the Spanish Chancellery was not carried on expeditiously or firmly. Despite O'Donnell's statement that his withdrawal of the Memorandum of 1896 was an act looking to the future, it is obvious that the Spanish Government only appealed to the Powers at times when the United States made proffers of its good offices for the ending of the revolution. Olney's action in 1896 provoked the famous Memorandum. Now General Woodford's interview with O'Donnell, offering a friendly intervention, diplomatically identical in form and substance with that of Olney, provoked a new appeal by Spain to the Powers, an appeal which was henceforth kept to the fore until war broke out. Success in diplomacy is possible only with sufficient time, and when there is no pressure of compelling immediate necessity. Spain, in asking for the second time the help of the Powers, failed in the necessary advance preparations, and the action she took, though forceful, was too forthright.

We shall see that the new phase of Spain's project to have Europe form an anti-American *bloc*, was more sustained and more hazardous than the earlier one.

In his "Memoirs," Prince von Bülow writes that Kaiser Wilhelm II had taken sides on the Cuban question early

in September, 1897, and that the Emperor was, on this occasion, as always in the case of foreign quarrels, greatly excited. Bülow explains: "In the threatening Spanish-American war, his sympathies were all on the side of Spain, simply because Spain was a monarchy and America a Republic." * Bülow attributes the Emperor's agitation over a matter which did not concern him, to his peculiar temperament. It seems, however, that on this occasion the Kaiser was playing his customary game of making advance preparations for a visit to Austria, to insure for himself an enthusiastic welcome.

From the historian's standpoint, Bülow's "Memoirs" is a very useful work, but the careful scholar will subject its every statement to rigid tests before accepting it. Bülow, in addition to his evident bias, and the handicap of a faulty memory, evidences of which are to be found in many pages of the "Memoirs," sins further by giving incomplete and inadequate treatment to many of the important matters he discusses.

Actually the Kaiser's interest in and excitement over the Spanish-American dispute was due, not to his peculiar temperament, but to the fact that he was soon to take part in the Austro-Hungarian manœuvres at Totis, where he was to meet Emperor Franz-Josef. Up to this time, the Austrian Emperor, because of old quarrels with the House of Hohenzollern, had never displayed any very great regard for his German colleague. From 1838 onward, Franz-Josef had been the ruler over many Germans and it was only natural that he had not relished being forced to take second place to the Hohenzollerns. He had been driven little by little by Prussia to submit to the distasteful experience of allowing William II to take a hand in Austro-Hungarian affairs, especially as to her armed forces.

In the Kaiser's mind, the wish was very strong that the disdainful old Franz-Josef, scion of an ancient family, together with his proud and exclusive court, should receive him with manifestations of great deference, should acknowledge his paramountcy, and should give every sign of wishing to please him. The Kaiser, though he lacked

* "Memoirs of Prince von Bülow," Little Brown & Co., Boston. 1931. 3 vols. Vol. II, p. 128.

depth and strength of character, had a keen nose for politics, and he was sure that, on his trip to Totis, the Spanish question would be taken up with him.

As it turned out, the old Emperor, acting at the request of the Spanish Queen Regent, did speak to the Kaiser at Totis, and the Kaiser, well prepared in advance as he always managed to be, was able to discourse about the monarchical principle, and the necessity for union among European sovereigns. Biased and unstable, impulsive and self-willed, the German Emperor, during the manoeuvres of the army of his ally, expressed repugnance for the United States, and talked of that country as though it had already been defeated. With his habitual aggressiveness, he sought and promptly found victims for his temporary hatred of America in the persons of some subaltern officers of the American Army, who were present at the manoeuvres. His conduct towards them was made the subject of a report to the Washington Government by Mr. Charlemagne Tower, United States Minister to Vienna: *

"First Lieutenant Chamberlain, the Military Attaché to this Legation, has reported officially to me that upon the occasion of the manoeuvres at Totis, in Hungary, which were attended by him and Captain Dorst, in the suite of the Emperor Francis Joseph, the German Emperor made a distinction between his greeting of them and other foreign officers then present in a similar capacity. When the Emperor William went down the line to receive the various Military Attachés who were presented to him in turn, he addressed a few words to each, and shook hands with him at the same time. Upon reaching Captain Dorst, however, he made an exception and did not shake hands with him, though he gave his hand to the officers on either side of him. As he approached the part of the line where Lieutenant Chamberlain was standing, he made the same distinction again, and did not shake hands with him, although he spoke a few polite words. During the period of these manoeuvres, however, the treatment received by both Captain Dorst and Lieutenant Chamberlain from the Emperor Francis Joseph was exceedingly courteous and friendly."

* Department of State of the U. S. of A. Vienna's Legation, 1897, No. 17.

It is not credible that the Kaiser's act of discourtesy was without significance; it was just the sort of thing he was always doing to further some particular plan or enterprise he had in hand. In the present case, his rebuff to the two inoffensive officers of the American Army, doubtless sprang from the attitude the Kaiser had assumed towards the Spanish-American imbroglio. Spain, as has been pointed out, was determined not to accept, under any conditions, the good offices of the United States, nor intervention of any kind. She had gone completely back to the stand of 1896: "The challenge to us of the United States must be answered by the European Powers." And the European Powers, each in its own way, had once again begun to give thought to the problem.

Documents in the French Archives at Paris reveal that, during the early days of October, 1897, Spain requested of her powerful neighbor nation, France, that in the event of complications of a serious nature between Spain and the United States, France and Russia should make an offer of their good offices to the two parties.⁷ It appears also that, on this occasion, the Madrid Government appealed separately to the two groups of Powers joined in alliances, but did not state that the action proposed should be collective.

The French Foreign Minister, Gabriel Hanotaux, consulted with the Russian Government about Spain's request, and the latter, in a note dated November 8, replied that "despite the sympathy felt for Spain, Russia's international relations are such that in this eventuality [that is, war], she would be compelled to take a neutral attitude." The Russian reply also declared that the only intervention possible, even if the crisis should become acute, would be a suggestion of arbitration.⁸

Spain's appeal to France was made jointly by the Queen Regent and the Minister of State, Segismundo Moret, to the French ambassador at Madrid. This was a variation of the course followed with respect to Germany. In the

⁷ These facts are taken from a resumé in my possession of the French documents.

⁸ French documents.

appeal to Germany, the Queen Regent ignored the German Foreign Minister, and made her request to the Kaiser through the Emperor of Austria. This I infer from the absence of any document in the publications of German official papers dealing with the second phase of Spain's project, and from the passage heretofore quoted from von Bülow, who was at the time Chancellor of Germany.

This assumption is further bolstered by the fact that the Kaiser, quite unexpectedly, telegraphed on September 28 to von Bülow, proposing intervention by Europe, or rather, intervention by the nations of Continental Europe only, on the side of Spain, in case of war with the United States. Bülow, who was, at the time, absent from Berlin, was nonplussed. On September 29, he telegraphed to the Chancellery a brief note to be delivered to the Kaiser, pleading for a careful study of the situation and, at all events, for no action until France and Russia should declare their adherence to the project for joint action. In his telegram Bülow said that he believed he was giving expression to the purpose of His Majesty, in stating that the Kaiser's objective was to prevent England and France from taking advantage of any German action in Spain's favor, in order to create difficulties for Germany with America or to secure commercial favors at Germany's expense. The Chancellor reminded the Emperor that economic interests had to be protected, and, with the statistics of world trade before him, he added:

"I feel I ought to point out that British exports to the United States amount to 170 millions of dollars, as against 94 millions for Germany, and 66 millions for France. American exports to England total 406 millions, compared with 97 millions to Germany, and 47 millions to France. Moreover, the new tariff law in the United States authorizes the President to concede special tariff favors in exchange for similar concessions by foreign nations. The trade between Russia, Austria-Hungary, Italy, and the United States and its possessions, is much less than the trade between the United States and England, Germany, and France." ⁹

⁹ "German Diplomatic Documents." Vol. II, p. 496.

Occupying the place of favorite at the Berlin court was Count Eulenburg, who enjoyed the complete confidence of his sovereign, with whom he was on terms of intimate friendship. In 1897, Eulenburg was at the zenith of his prestige and, according to Bülow, was being considered by the Kaiser for the post of Chancellor—it was only as a result of Eulenburg's personal urgency that the Kaiser relinquished the idea of naming him, and instead gave the portfolio to von Bülow. As at other times, the Kaiser, with his habitual impetuosity, now sought to have Eulenburg put pressure on the Chancellor. Eulenburg approved the idea of a European intervention, for the reason that the question at issue was one involving the monarchical principle. Eulenburg thought, as did everyone else at the time, that Spain's loss of her Antillean colony would mean the fall of the Spanish monarchy. But he felt that no trust could be put in England and France, and that the best thing to do would be to suggest secretly to Austria that, because of the bonds uniting the Austrian reigning house with that of Spain, it was appropriate and desirable that leadership in a collective action by the Great Powers should be assumed by Austria. Eulenburg believed also that, since it would be difficult to induce Republican France to participate in defense of a monarchy, it would be best to present the case to France in a different way, such as the offer of reciprocal protection for colonial possessions. In Eulenburg's opinion, Austria would undoubtedly accept such leadership: "Count Goluchowski has always tried to interest us in Spain, and would therefore, being sure of our agreement, undertake the suggestion in the Queen's [of Spain] interests."¹⁰

Eulenburg's views were transmitted on September 30 to von Bülow, who replied on the same day. He agreed with Eulenburg that Austria should start the movement. He felt, however, that Germany ought to keep two things in mind, first, that in no case should Germany take the initiative and, second, that Germany should join the collective action only after England and France, or at least France, had promised cooperation. The ideal, von Bülow argued, would be for Russia and France, or France

¹⁰ "German Diplomatic Documents." Vol. III, p. 497.

alone, or England alone, to assume the leadership. Bülow preferred a coalition of all the great European powers, and not merely of the Continental ones, as Eulenburg had tentatively suggested.¹¹

The Kaiser, with the telegram from Bülow before him, made certain notations on the margin. At the place in the telegram where reference was made to France, he wrote, "It seems that France is willing." Alongside the statement that under no circumstances should Germany take the initiative, the Kaiser pencilled, "Austria should take it." To the suggestion that England take the lead, he noted, "Hardly likely!" No longer, apparently, did the Kaiser hold the same views as when he attended the manoeuvres at Totis.

Bülow, it appears, allowed days to pass without taking any action. The Kaiser, on the other hand, was as busy as always, and he kept up a rapid-fire correspondence with Vienna. In Vienna, however, the situation was about the same as at Berlin. Emperor Franz-Josef was deeply concerned over the troubles threatening the Queen of Spain, but Goluchowski was opposed to assuming grave responsibilities of leadership. Among numerous reasons for his reluctance, was the fact that Austria did not have a powerful fleet. Her coast-line, too, was small. In the event of war, Austria's contribution would be less than that of any other of the Great Powers, and the risks she would run would be small. Hence it was not easy to persuade Goluchowski to initiate the action for a coalition in the name of the Austrian Government. If the action was to be taken at all, time would be required, and also strong pressure on Goluchowski by Franz-Josef. Thus as late as October 15, 1897, Prince von Lichnowsky, German Chargé d'Affaires at Vienna, was able to telegraph his home government that having touched on the Cuban question in a talk with Goluchowski, he was sure that the latter would not consider taking any action to forward Spain's project, unless Spain should herself appeal directly to the Cabinets of the Great Powers.¹²

The instructions which Bülow now sent to Lichnowsky

¹¹ "German Diplomatic Documents." Vol. II, pages 497-98.

¹² "German Diplomatic Documents." Vol. II, p. 498.

were very precise. Bülow, when not writing to the Kaiser, was more exigent in the conditions he imposed as a prerequisite to Germany's joining the collective project. On October 17, 1897, he wrote to his Vienna representative: ¹³

"If the question of intervention about Cuba comes forward in Vienna, you will represent that success can only be expected, and the danger of greater complications avoided, if the action taken by Europe is general in character, and if, in particular, the British and French naval forces take up an unambiguous position in favor of intervention. Premature action by Germany would probably arouse jealousy both in London and Paris, and militate against participation by the naval powers. Our gracious Master has therefore, really in Spain's interests, expressed his opinion that, on political grounds, Germany should not lead the western powers in their position on the Cuban question, but he is prepared to consider seriously all proposals reaching us from London or Paris,—perhaps after suggestion by Austria."

At long last, in early December, 1897, Austria began action. Feeling certain now of the support of Germany and Italy, the Austrian Chancellery sent instructions to its envoy at Madrid. Thereupon the Spanish Foreign Office once again took up with the French and Russian ambassadors at Madrid, the question of intervention by the Great Powers in any crisis that should arise between Spain and the United States over the Cuban war for independence.

The Spanish Foreign Minister, in an interview with the French and Russian envoys (representing the countries of the Dual Alliance), said that the powers of the Triple Alliance—Austria, Germany, and Italy—had already committed themselves to adherence to the Spanish plan, as a result of the initiative of Austria. Without actually altering the facts, but keeping silent about some of them, he tried to make each of the two groups believe that a general agreement by all could be easily achieved.

To this new sounding, the Russian and French Governments replied that they were disposed to cooperate,

¹³ "German Diplomatic Documents." Vol. II, p. 498.

but only to the extent, in the event of a crisis, of urging arbitration.

At Paris, the Spanish Ambassador again put direct pressure on Hanotaux. He explained to him that the intervention which was asked was not one of cannons and ships, but of representations and recommendations to the Washington Government. Minister Hanotaux replied, concretely, that France would associate herself in good faith with any action subscribed to unanimously and collectively by the European Powers, if such a thing could be brought about, but that he doubted whether such unanimity of agreement could be realized. Spain could, at least, derive consolation from the fact that Hanotaux had not refused to join in a collective conciliatory gesture to the Washington Government if all the other Powers would join likewise.¹⁴

Russia, in her attitude, remained always very reserved, declining to associate herself with general actions. Being at the time the natural enemy of England, she did not wish to take a step which might result in England's being drawn closer to the United States.

The viewpoint of high politics on the part of the Russian Government gave a tone to official and social life at the Muscovite capital. About the middle of 1897, American Minister Breckenridge noticed about him at St. Petersburg a widely diffused atmosphere of cordiality. The Czar spoke to him on one occasion about Cuba, and, shaking his hand warmly, assured him of Russia's friendship for the United States. At another time Lobanoff said to him that the Russian counsel in Cuba¹⁵ had written him that, whatever happened, Cuba was lost to Spain.¹⁶ Another time the Czar told him: "We are always in agreement with the United States, and I hope that we shall remain so, for the good of our two countries." Breckenridge believed that these expressions were sincere; in a communication to Washington, he said:¹⁷

¹⁴ These data are taken from the resumé of the documents in the Paris archives, to which allusion has previously been made.

¹⁵ Senor Regino Truffin, a Cuban of French family, and a good patriot.

¹⁶ U. S. State Department Archives. Vol. 50. 1897. Russia.

¹⁷ U. S. Department of State. Vol. 50. 1897. Russia.

"Russia wishes us well and, indeed, is rather pleased. We shall never threaten her possessions, or seriously rival her interests; but she does not object to the step causing some anxiety to England, particularly, so as to give the latter something else to think about besides matters in hand where English attention does not entirely contribute to Russia's purposes."

The Spanish project fell in with a period of keen rivalry between England and Russia, which, beginning in 1894, lasted until 1907, when it was ended by a convention. In Persia, in Afghanistan, in Turkestan, in Thibet, and also in the Mediterranean, and in Manchuria, the two great empires carried on a struggle of interests. Bismarck, foreseeing this friction, had told Jules Ferry that France should expand in Africa, and he had given to Russia, the shrewd advice: "There is nothing in Europe for Russia except Nihilism and other maladies. Russia's mission is in Asia, where she represents civilization." England, confronted by the Dual Alliance, with Russia blocking her every step in the Orient, and the French empire colliding with her in Africa, was aware, nevertheless, that the real danger for her lay in the growing strength of Germany. While, on the periphery, the Dual Alliance attacked her, in the center she was vis à vis with Germany. The people of England understood the situation before their government did, and became unrelentingly hostile to Germany.

But the rivalry between England and Russia did not prevent the two Powers from joining in a dual effort to render ineffectual the attempt to create a European *bloc*, having for its purpose intervention in the affairs of the New World.

CHAPTER VI

AUSTRIA HEADS THE COALITION

THE Queen Regent, Maria Cristina, noting the precipitancy with which events were happening, intensified her labor with the monarchs to form a coalition of the Powers to aid Spain. Monarchical politics, paralleling the politics of the responsible ministers, became increasingly active. To one after another of the crowned heads of Europe, the Queen made appeal. With dignity, taking shrewd advantage of special circumstances, she argued the cause of her country and of her family. In a letter to the Czar of Russia, she thanked him for the courteous reception he had given a Spanish diplomatic mission to the Russian court, and then invited his attention to the difficulties that faced her. To the Queen of England, she wrote about a happy family event, and then repeated the same appeal. Writing to Franz-Josef, she had, of course, no need of pretexts.

President McKinley's wish was to avoid war, and in making the proffer of his good offices, he was entirely sincere. His Message of December, 1897, read at the opening of Congress, had not been well received by those favoring independence for Cuba, and intervention by the United States in the Cuban struggle. The passions which stirred the crowd did not touch him; instead he declared himself a friend of peace and of Spain. But the state of public opinion and the attitude of Congress were such, that sooner or later he would find himself obliged to submit to their will. But while the American President talked of peace, his government was making preparations for war. The navy was being rapidly prepared for action, and vessels concentrated in the seas to the South.

Under the circumstances, no statesman would consider

such activities improper. The statesman realizes that he is simply an agent who must be foresighted enough to use all means to the end that the rights, interests, and tranquillity of his principal shall not suffer. To inflict upon the government of a country the exaggerations of personal sentimentality, piety, or love, though they arise from the noblest impulses, is inexcusable in a diplomat or a minister. Many sentiments which are praiseworthy, when the individual alone is considered, must be condemned, when they sacrifice the interests of others.

At the beginning of 1898, the Spanish-American situation was no longer capable of solution through normal diplomacy.

Neither the people nor the Queen Regent of Spain were willing to concede independence to Cuba, and Cuba demanded independence as the *sine qua non* of peace. The sounding out by Spain of several leaders of the revolution, for the purpose of reaching a compromise, was not only without result, but caused the Cuban revolutionary government to threaten with hanging anyone making such proposals; and its threats were carried out in all cases. The rebels had for their slogan, "Independence or death!" and, because of a fanaticism justified by the lofty character of the cause for which they fought, they were disposed to die before again accepting Spanish sovereignty, no matter how diluted.

It was the strong belief of both the Conservative and Liberal Cabinets of Spain in the Fall of 1897, that, should Cuba win independence, the Spanish monarchy would inevitably fall. Both groups of ministers believed that the only possibility of peace which might save both the monarchy and the colony, lay in an intervention by Europe which would prevent the United States from joining in the struggle on the side of Cuba. Spain put all her faith in this hoped-for intervention, and made no preparations for war.

About the middle of February, 1898, Spain started once again on her sorrowful *via crucis* with another appeal to the Great Powers. With special zeal in the case of the Ambassador of Germany, most important of the

nations in the Triple Alliance, and with hardly less zeal in the case of the Ambassador of France, the more amenable of the Powers in the Dual Alliance, the Spanish Government sought to learn what help it could expect. This activity at Madrid was paralleled and supplemented by the efforts of the Spanish ambassadors at Berlin and Paris.

Mendez Vigo, Spanish ambassador to Germany, visited, on orders from Madrid, the German Minister of Foreign Relations and told him that the movements of American warships in Cuban waters caused his government great anxiety; because of this, he had been instructed to ask if the German Government was prepared to accept leadership of a European coalition to defend the monarchical principle against the aggressiveness of the American republic.¹ By a strange coincidence, Bülow communicated to Radovitz, German ambassador in Madrid, these declarations of the Spanish Ambassador in Berlin concerning Spain's preoccupation over the movements of American ships in Cuban waters on the very day when an explosion caused the American battleship "Maine" to sink in the Bay of Havana.

The Kaiser, consulted by Bülow about this new Spanish initiative, said that he was always ready to defend the monarchical principle when he could do so with success, but that, in the present case, he felt that every suggestion which Germany might make, would be counter-productive, because France, whose cooperation was indispensable, would not follow the leadership of a monarchical Germany against a republic. The emperor was of the opinion, Bülow reported, that if France, because of considerations of a material order not connected with the monarchical principle, and because of the conflict of interests which seemed to exist between her and the United States, should wish to accept leadership in the matter, and carry her complaints against the United States into the sphere of the Cuban problem, Germany would be strongly disposed to cooperate in a collective European action, which should have at the start only a diplomatic character. The Emperor further stated, as quoted by Bülow, "that the friendship shown by the gov-

¹ "German Diplomatic Documents." Vol. II, p. 499.

ernment of Spain for more than thirteen years towards France, and towards French investments in Spain, justifies the assumption that the Paris cabinet would not reject a Spanish appeal for help.”²

The Kaiser's advice was received with approval at Madrid, and the Queen Regent, through Ambassador Leon y Castillo, requested of Hanotaux, French Foreign Minister, that he consult the Great Powers with respect to the possibility of European intervention in the dispute. But Hanotaux, while declaring himself disposed to co-operate, roundly refused to take the initiative, which he said should be assumed by Austria.³

The German Government had requested the Spanish Government to maintain complete secrecy about these conversations, and so also had the French Government. But on March 12 the Italian Ambassador already knew all, and was able to communicate to his Government the following resumé of the situation:

“The Spanish Government, in which Germany has demonstrated a continuing interest, has made propositions to the Emperor that he do something to show his friendship for Spain, and to weaken, if not prevent, any action by the Americans in favor of Cuba. The German Emperor has replied that he would willingly assent to the Spanish request, were it not that he believes that success can better be attained if Spain can get France to take the initiative, after which he will give his hearty support to any action France might take. The French Government, in its turn, has replied warmly and favorably, but it also does not wish to take the lead in proposing a collective moral action to the Great Powers.”⁴

But if the Kaiser became enthusiastic in defending the monarchical principle, though without losing sight of Germany's interests, Bülow, as his Chancellor, studied and weighed, with admirable precision, the consequences of every step that might be taken. Bülow believed that Germany should leave no door open, through which an American question might penetrate to Europe. Equilibrium had been reached in Europe, despite grave diffi-

² “German Diplomatic Documents.” Vol. II, p. 499.

³ French Archives.

⁴ Italian Documents.

culties, and at the cost of much effort. No chance must be taken of disturbing this equilibrium, by any action in the interest of a Power which had for long been indifferent to Germany. The Chancellor's ideas were practical. He viewed it as regrettable that the Queen Regent should suffer the consequences of past errors, but "it was possible to foresee that Spain, whose colonial administration was notoriously behind the demands of the age, would end by having trouble with her colonies." It was even more regrettable, Bülow felt, that responsibility for the failure should come to weigh upon the Regent; but he thought this might be removed from her to a certain extent by an appeal to the Pope to act as arbitrator in the conflict.⁵ At all events, Bülow was of the opinion that the position taken by France was ambiguous, and that it would consequently be necessary, before Germany could take any action, that Russia should definitely declare her adherence to the coalition. The Chancellor did not expect that Russia would take such action, and he believed, also, that England would prefer to maintain cordial relations with America, rather than with Spain.⁶ In all these proceedings, the statesman who comported himself with greatest candor and good judgment was the German Chancellor. And that with William II for his chief!

Bülow did not wish an American question to find entry into Europe, as the result of a European intervention. In this wish, he found strong support at St. Petersburg. But the matter had already, although nothing in the shape of positive action had been taken, become a subject for inter-European intrigues and disputes. In the attitudes taken by Germany and France, each wishing to prove its friendship for Spain, while impugning the other's motives, appeared the first of the difficulties which Bülow wished to avoid.

The ambassadors of the United States to Germany and France fully understood the situation and, despite their lack of knowledge concerning the secret maneuverings—they were able to learn very little—they believed, correctly, that the coalition could not be consummated,

⁵ "German Diplomatic Documents." Vol. II, p. 500.

⁶ "German Diplomatic Documents." Vol. II, p. 500.

because Powers having interests in jeopardy in many other regions, would not join it.

It may be said, as perhaps not too improbable for belief, that it was to the advantage of the American envoys not to know about the maneuverings of the chancelleries, for the reason that, had they known, they would have regarded them as definitive, whereas they were actually no more than vain tentatives. It is helpful on occasion not to know too much; for one thing, the nervous tension is not so great!

Writing at Berlin, January 7, 1898, American Ambassador Andrew W. White reported to his Government: ⁷

"On the Continent there has never been a time, probably, when ill will towards the United States has been so strong as at present. Nevertheless, I do not believe that a coalition will be formed against us. The interests of European nations are so diverse, and in many respects so mutually hostile, that it would be very difficult to organize a coalition of them against us. This is the more true, because feeling is more intense about the questions dividing Europe, than it is about those between America and Europe."

This system of following the important lines in international politics, as Ambassador White did, is always very useful. Small incidents, or efforts made to create new situations, have results only when strong and well-defined tendencies favorable to them already exist. When such tendencies do not exist, the incidents diminish in importance, and the effort to bring into being new situations becomes futile.

At Paris, Ambassador Horace Porter understood, from the beginning, the reasons why French public opinion should be sympathetic to Spain, but he was also convinced that the French Government would take no aggressive attitude against the United States. In a note to the Secretary of State, July 13, 1897, he wrote: ⁸

"There are three reasons which make France feel kindly to Spain. Her people are of the Latin Race. Frenchmen

⁷ U. S. State Department Archives.

⁸ U. S. State Department Archives.

have purchased Spanish bonds, and have a pecuniary interest in Spanish railways, and, having colonies of her own, France fears a policy of interference with any colonies of European powers. But I think it will be found that these considerations would not induce her to take any hostile steps towards us as a nation, in case we should be obliged to resort to vigorous action in reference to the deplorable condition of things in Cuba."

The next move in the development of Spain's initiative, consisted of a note to Austria, proposing that she support a Spanish demand for Germany to head the coalition. Austria acquiesced, and Ambassador von Szogyeny at Berlin made representations to that effect to Bülow, alleging that France had already agreed to participate in the coalition. But the inflexible German Chancellor again refused, and he even receded somewhat from his previous attitude in the hope of putting a damper on the overly optimistic aspirations of the Spanish Government, and the Austrian court. Following his talk with von Szogyeny, he wrote a letter of instructions to the German ambassador at Madrid: "[You will communicate to the government of Spain that] after a careful study of this subject, the Emperor regrets greatly not to be able to cooperate in a composition of the Spanish-American conflict, until France adopts an unequivocal attitude, and gives her promise to cooperate."⁹

Bülow, despite the fine words of the French Government, was dubious about France's attitude towards the coalition. France had refused to accept leadership of the coalition, on the pretext that since her ally, Russia, was on intimate terms with the government at Washington, such a course would not be appropriate. Bülow believed himself justified in inferring that France would not take, in this question or in any other international question, a position not in harmony with Russia's. For this reason, Bülow thought that France and Russia should unequivocally guarantee that they would join the coalition, before Germany announced her decision to offer her cooperation.

⁹ "German Diplomatic Documents." Vol. II, p. 502.

In Spain, though doubt was felt that Germany would accept Austria's proposal, it was not expected that definitive declarations could be obtained from France and Russia, before Germany should declare herself favorable to cooperation. For the Spanish Ministers, the new declaration of Bülow was a serious setback, coming, as it did, at a time when hope was high. The Spanish Minister of State, Gullon, in a despatch to Ambassador Leon y Castillo at Paris, mirrored this disappointment, and urged the Ambassador to renewed efforts with the French Government: "Telegram from Your Excellency received last night gives me extreme satisfaction, since it proves that France maintains, and will augment, friendly attitude. On that government, as well as on the intelligence and zeal of Your Excellency, depends in great part whether we shall overcome, or at least moderate, the grave circumstances in which we find ourselves. To that end, it is very necessary that Monsieur Hanotaux put pressure upon the Czar and his cabinet, (to whom we also are addressing ourselves), because Germany, as a consequence of I do not know what reservations or distinctions, seems to be looking to St. Petersburg, before giving to our proposal the frank, warm, and immediate adherence which, because of her previous acts, we had every right to expect."¹⁰

All of this in reality was but one of the many feints in the never-ending duel which, since the beginning of the Franco-Russian alliance, had been waged in the silence of the chancelleries over all questions between Germany and France. Both Powers feared to compromise themselves separately with the United States. Both would have liked to help Spain, by participating in a collective action, but each was fearful lest the other should leave a door open, through which to withdraw at the last moment.

This feinting made difficulties for Spain, but, while it was going on, the Spanish Queen succeeded, with the effective aid of the French Ambassador to Vienna, Marquis de Reverseaux, who had formerly been stationed at

¹⁰ Spanish Archives. Docket 37.

Madrid, in getting Austria to shoulder the entire responsibility.¹¹

In Austria, a cleavage existed between the Crown and the Ministry. But Goluchowski was not a Bülow, and Franz-Josef had greater authority than William II. Goluchowski did not oppose the will of Franz-Josef, but was very slow in putting his wishes into effect. Some days after the decision taken by Austria, on March 27, the Spanish Ambassador to Russia, in a telegram to Gullon at Madrid, reported that the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs had not yet been informed that the Emperor of Austria had taken the initiative in "a joint action of the Powers to compel respect for our [Spain's] rights, and to prevent the frequent intrusion of Americans in Cuban affairs."¹²

The Czar's Minister, though he had not yet received instructions from his Emperor, had already fixed the limits of Russia's policy. Russia, in case of a general union of the European Powers, would join with the others, but in no case would she take the initiative. So much Russia would do, but the Minister was, at the same time, convinced that whatever step the powers might take, would be both useless and dangerous; useless because, if it was limited to a simple admonition, it would have no results; dangerous, because if it involved a threat it would have results contrary to those desired, and because mixing into the affairs of the United States at this time, would set a precedent which the United States might, at some future time, cite as justification for mixing in European matters.¹³

While Austria moved slowly, events in America moved rapidly, and at Madrid Minister Gullon spurred on his envoys. All of the latter asked aid from sympathetic colleagues and made repeated visits to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs. But the project was shifted from court to court, and, as the old Spanish adage has it, "affairs of

¹¹ Spanish Archives. Docket 37. Telegram of March 25, 1898, from the Minister of State to the Spanish Ambassador in Vienna.

¹² Spanish Archives. Docket 37.

¹³ Spanish Archives. Telegram.

the palace move slowly." As usual, Spanish diplomacy was sensitive, even timid, as the following letter, sent by Minister of State Gullon to Hoyos, Spanish Ambassador in Vienna, reveals:

"If before these [grave] circumstances came into being, I sought to show to Your Excellency the affectionate confidence I have in you, you may be assured I have it still, and that I believe that you, in the face of difficulties, will show yourself, because of your love for the monarchy and the fatherland, during all the time you remain at your post, equal to whatever may be demanded of us in these difficult moments. It is important that you do not offend with an excess of zeal the very elevated persons who, in that court as in our own, have been touched by the precipitancy of recent events. But it is very desirable that you give every aid to the action of the Emperor and his Cabinet, that you give careful heed to the comments of the Marquis de Reverseaux, keeping in constant touch with him and with the Imperial Government, and telegraphing me in cipher anything you think I ought to know. It appears that, in St. Petersburg, the keystone of our project, which was lacking, has been found. From there comes direction for our efforts, and there we hope will be joined the efforts of France, and above all those of His Excellency the Ambassador of Austria, which we feel sure will be definitive." ¹⁴

As has been stated several times in these pages, the action was double, one part of it executed by responsible governments, the other by monarchs, with both at times intertwined. With great energy, Franz-Josef now approached the sovereigns. The Kaiser of Germany, acting separately from his government, started work with the German ambassadors in Vienna, Madrid, and Washington, with whom he communicated directly.

Queen Victoria, showing greater prudence than the others, had not replied to the Queen Regent's letter on March 21, and this caused anxiety not only in Madrid but at Vienna.¹⁵ Even the President of the French Republic was willing to address himself to the Czar personally, and it was believed at Madrid that if he should do

¹⁴ Spanish Archives. Docket 37.

¹⁵ Spanish Archives. Telegram from the Spanish Ambassador at Vienna to the Minister of State, Madrid, March 27, 1898.

so, the Kaiser would do likewise.¹⁶ From Italy came encouraging reports; the Cabinet, despite the objections of several very influential men in the Foreign Service, was disposed to go along with the other Powers. It was felt, in all the courts, that Europe must join in an action to maintain the unity of the Old World. The most approved formula was that Europe, for the time being, should have no difficulties with Spain, and that, in Spain, order should be maintained and the monarchy continued. An American question must not be permitted to disturb the peace of Europe.

The letter to which allusion was made at the beginning of this chapter, from Queen Maria Cristina to Queen Victoria, can be given here in its entirety, except for a few omissions which the editor of the "Letters," George Earle Buckle, thought it prudent to make. Rendered into English from the original French, it reads:

"17th March 1898.— . . . Full of trust in you, I am writing to explain my difficult position, convinced that you will support me with your powerful help and good advice. So far Spain has struggled alone against all difficulties, and overcome them one after another. Now comes the war with Cuba: all this our poor country has done and, without foreign aid, she has given her children for the fatherland, her money for the war, and is even now ready for every sacrifice. We should long ago have brought the war in Cuba to an end, had America remained *neutral*, but she continually sent money, munitions, and weapons to the rebels; and now, when the insurrection is nearly over, the Americans intend to provoke us and bring about a war, and this I would avoid at all costs. But there are limits to everything, and I cannot let my country be humbled by America. . . . The Committee of the so-called Cuban Republic is recognized and supported by the Government in New York, and its members are received in official circles as representatives of Cuba. But for this protection by America, the insurrection in Cuba would have been long ago suppressed. . . .

Until now I have not troubled anybody with my affairs, and I only do so now in order to preserve peace. I have applied to the Emperor of Austria, who promised to approach the other Powers in order that common action may

¹⁶ Spanish Archives. Docket 37.

be taken for the preservation of peace; but I wished to address myself to you at the same time, to beg you not to deny me your powerful protection. I know how, with the greatest kindness, you always interest yourself in my poor fatherless son—for *his* sake I beg you to help me. It would so distress me if England were not at one with the other Great Powers in this matter! . . ." ¹⁷

By the end of March, 1898, the second Spanish initiative seemed to be winning. France was willing to support a discreet action at Washington; the Kaiser, though inclined to be somewhat reserved, was disposed to associate himself in a general action, provided that France also should join; Austria and Italy were in agreement with the Kaiser's attitude; Russia, while not believing in the practicability of a joint action, nevertheless would not withhold her assent in the event that all the others should concur.

The enigma was in London.

As a consequence of the role which Madrid believed that Sir Henry Drummond Wolff had played in the matter of the Memorandum in 1896, Spain was suspicious of England. The Great Powers of the Continent were also suspicious. The political history of the century then ending, the difficulties of the times, the deference which Britain was increasingly showing towards the United States, and the eagerness she displayed to eradicate every cause for misunderstanding between the two countries, should have been sufficient warning to Spain and the Continental Powers that England would never join a European coalition against the United States. England would see to it, of course, that both parties should have the opportunity to appraise the help she could give at a high value, and she would strive, as was her custom, to delay events; always she would be the very last to make known her decision. But it should have been clear to every one that, with the international situation what it was, England would do nothing which the United States might regard as unfriendly. Furthermore, it was obvious that England, being in a position

¹⁷ "Letters of Queen Victoria," 1896-1901. Vol. III, p. 236.

to do the United States a service, would do so only at the last moment, and then in a manner that would be decisive.

Queen Victoria, because the party of her predilection—the Conservative—was in power, exercised a strong influence over her Ministers. On many occasions, she made the weight of her authority felt by them, as is shown by the volumes of her "Letters." The great concern which Victoria felt for Spain is made manifest, not by the reply she sent to Maria Cristina, which was not among those of her letters that have been published, but by her Diary.

The fact of this omission argues that it was not phrased in a manner which the United States would find pleasing. Of this reply, we know only that the English sovereign told the Spanish Queen that she would work in harmony with the other Powers in Spain's interest. In her Diary, the Queen refers several times to the difficulties of the times, the war which threatened, and the strong sympathy she felt for Spain, as the nation in the dispute representing the monarchical principle. We find in her Diary, under date of April 21: "War seems hopelessly declared, and the respective Spanish and United States Ministers have left their posts! It is monstrous of America."¹⁸ On July 6, on learning of a Spanish naval defeat, she noted in the Journal: "Accounts of the Spanish-American War are dreadful. The Spanish fleet has been destroyed, and the Admiral taken prisoner."¹⁹

The Queen would not reply to the Spanish monarch's letter without getting the advice of her Ministers. At the time, both the Queen and the Prime Minister were in the south of France, the former at Cimiez, and Salisbury at Beaulieu. On April 1, Salisbury gave the Queen his opinion, in a note written, after the traditional practice, in the third person:²⁰

"The Spanish question is very grave; and Lord Salisbury would not like to advise your Majesty to give any undertaking to assist the Queen of Spain, without consulting his colleagues; for any communication from this country to

¹⁸ "Letters of Queen Victoria," 1896-1901. Vol. III, p. 244.

¹⁹ Idem. Page 257.

²⁰ "Letters of Queen Victoria." 1896-1901. Vol. III, p. 239.

the United States, in the way of remonstrances, might arouse their susceptible feelings, and produce a condition of some danger, without any corresponding advantage. At the same time, Lord Salisbury thinks that your Majesty would not refuse to join in any course taken by all the other Great Powers. But he doubts the expediency of action by them. It is more likely to help the war party in the United States than to weaken them.

The position of the Queen Regent of Spain is most lamentable and grievous. It is impossible not to feel the deepest sympathy for her."

Queen Victoria, though she had received the Queen Regent's letter on March 17, delayed replying to it until April 4. Both Madrid and Vienna, compelled to wait, became extremely disturbed and anxious about the attitude which England might take.

If Salisbury felt pity for Maria Cristina, the stand he took towards Spain was not very friendly. One must really admire the spectacle of England in this confused and complicated period of history, when, with a finger in every pie, she slipped out of the Spanish question, leaving it to the other Powers to do whatever should be done.

In this, the first quarter of 1898, Ambassador Drummond Wolff was absent from his Madrid post—and continued to be absent. In so serious a situation, with war a possibility, and with so tenacious an effort on the part of the Madrid Government to organize a European *bloc* against the United States, the absence of the British Ambassador can not be viewed as without significance. Spain understood, of course, but Spain was not in a position to complain. Nevertheless, Maria Cristina did make a gesture at retaliation by taking an action which, unhappily for the effect Spain wanted, could not have been worse, or more to Britain's liking. The Queen Regent, in summoning the envoys of the Great Powers to the Royal Palace on March 24th and 25th, omitted inviting the *Chargé d'Affaires* of England, and the Ambassador of Italy—Italy, she believed, would, as happened frequently in that day, side with England on all questions not entirely European.²¹

²¹ Italian Documents. Letter from the Italian Ambassador to Madrid to the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, March 26, 1898.

For a year and a half, Sir Henry Drummond Wolff had been regarded with coldness by the Spanish Ministry of State. Minister Woodford, in a letter to President McKinley several months earlier, (October 20, 1897), spoke of the difficult position of the British Ambassador, and of the latter's attitude: ²²

"Yesterday I had so interesting a conversation with the British Ambassador, that, while I do not feel at liberty to make it the subject of an official dispatch, I want you to know about it. . . . The Ambassador mentioned that Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace had asked Senor Gullon (Minister of State) to show him a copy of our note of September 23rd, but that Gullon had excused himself from doing so. I at once remembered, but did not mention, that the French Ambassador, Marquis de Reverseaux, had told me, in our interview of Monday, October 11th, that he had seen that note. And, a moment after, Sir Henry added that while it had not been shown to Sir Donald Mackenzie or himself, he believed that it had been shown to the French and Russian Ambassadors. Sir Donald Mackenzie Wallace is the Foreign Director of the London Times, and keeps constantly in touch with the foreign policy of the British Government. He was here as Sir Henry's guest for about a week.

At this point I became deeply interested in the conversation.

Pretty soon Sir Henry remarked that the French and Russian Ambassadors were up to something in connection with the Spanish Ministry. . . . He went on to say that France was naturally interested in Spain, and wished to keep on good terms with Spain; that the French largely owned the Spanish railways, and had other investments here; and that it was believed that French holdings in Spanish properties and in public debts, etc., amounted to about two hundred million pounds sterling, or about one thousand million dollars."

The letter here goes into a discussion between the two men about the purchase, by French or English bankers, of the property owned in Cuba by the Spanish Crown and Government, which, not being pertinent to the subject in hand, may be omitted.

"Before leaving him I said that while our then conversation had been personal and, in that sense, confidential, I

²² U. S. State Department Archives.

felt that, should the general subject ever come up between us again, both of us had better feel at entire liberty to report officially to our governments any conversation that we might thereafter have. He agreed with me, but I do not think the subject will again be broached by him. I certainly shall not introduce it myself. Still he will probably write personally to Lord Salisbury, just as I am writing to you."

The ending Woodford gave to his letter is reminiscent of the ending of another letter, sent by the Venetian Ambassador, Foscari, to his home government in 1501, in which he reported at length a very intimate and confidential conversation he had had with the Bishop of Novara. Foscari concluded: "He asked me not to let you know of our talk, and I promised not to do so!"

From January 1898 onward, the Spanish Government had been anxious to find out what would be England's attitude, but had learned absolutely nothing. The insistence of the Madrid Ministers with Rascon, Spain's new Ambassador to London, reflects the perplexity of the Spaniards. Roscon himself did not know what to think. The words that came from the lips of the English ministers were beyond reproach, but the substance of them pointed towards a policy of strict neutrality in case of war. The ministers at London received the peace hints made to them by Madrid; they deplored any and every threat to peace; they were willing to instruct the British Ambassador at Washington that, if a good opportunity presented itself, he should explain to Washington Spain's wish for conciliation. But they were unwilling to give the Washington Government advice that Washington had not asked for, or to make any commitments as to the course England would take in the future.²⁸

Madrid, in view of this attitude, became convinced that an understanding existed between England and the United States, and sought to find out what it was, at the same time warning Rascon at London not to ask for information from Drummond Wolff. A telegram was despatched to Rascon on March 26: "I understand that the absence of Salisbury will increase the difficulties of Your Excellency in re certain confidential investigations,

²⁸ Spanish Archives. Docket 37. Telegram from the Spanish Ambassador to London to the Minister of State, Madrid. March 23, 1898.

but I wish nevertheless that Your Excellency should learn if Great Britain actually has made any agreement with the United States in the event of war, or if Britain's silence is due solely to the wish to keep her hands free, and not to be bound in advance by any commitment, tacit or express, with the government of the Republic. If at the very earliest possible moment you can inform us with respect to these questions, you will do us a great service. Do not, however, ask anything of Drummond Wolff." ²⁴

And on April 1, this same Spanish Minister of State, replying to a communication from Rascon, characterized the policy pursued by England as strange and mystifying: "The attitude of that [the English] Government, and the views of its ministers are, as I have been told in Rome, even stranger and more mystifying than Your Excellency believes. This cannot be the result of their blundering, but must be due to a policy or interest not friendly to us. In the circumstances, it will not do for you to insist overmuch on the questions formulated towards the end of my long telegram. It will be enough for you merely to present them, and meanwhile we must be patient, and seek to learn what that government is doing, and what it proposes to do."

What had happened, in short, was that with the instinct peculiar to the statesmen of Great Britain, England had begun to realize that the new power arising in America might some day be very useful to her, and that for England to give her aid to Spain, would bring her not benefits but difficulties. Besides, with the internal equilibrium of Europe upset by the growing strength of Germany, England foresaw trying times ahead. The words of Henry Adams were not inappropriate:

"The sudden appearance of Germany as the grisly terror which in twenty years affected what Adamsses had tried for two hundred in vain—frightened England into America's arms." ²⁵

After war between Spain and the United States began, England proclaimed herself strictly neutral. Spain

²⁴ Spanish Archives.

²⁵ The phrase is quoted by Allan Nevins, in "Henry White," p. 129.

doubted that England's profession was sincere. An incident that occurred early in the summer of 1898 caused suspicion of England to increase, and convinced Spain that England was really hostile to her.

The Spanish Government, as a defensive measure against a possible attack on Spanish coasts by an American fleet, began to fortify the mountains overlooking Gibraltar. Promptly Ambassador Drummond Wolff reported this activity to his Government. Lord Salisbury, in reply, instructed Wolff to make energetic protests. In a telegram to Wolff (August 11, 1898) he declared: "The Gibraltar incident is very serious. The installation of batteries, or the emplacement of large-bore cannons dominating the fortress or the anchorages, can make the place practically of no use to us in case of war. We must not turn away from whatever consequences may follow our putting a stop to this activity. And although we leave to you the presentation of our views in a manner not offensive to Spain's sensibilities, we urge that you leave no room for doubt concerning our determination in this matter."

Balfour, who at the time was dealing with foreign affairs on his own initiative, owing to the frequent absences of Lord Salisbury, advised Queen Victoria that Spain was continuing her military preparations in the mountains near Algeciras. At about the same time, Victoria received another letter from Queen Maria Cristina: ²⁶

"My dear Aunt: The kindness you have always shown me, and the interest you have always taken in Spain, encourage me to address you directly and inform you about a matter which causes me great uneasiness in these difficult times through which our poor country is passing.

When I wrote you, my dear Aunt, on March 17 last, to beg that you aid me in preserving peace, you were good enough to reply, on April 4, after consulting with Lord Salisbury, promising me that you would join with the other powers in defending the interests of Spain.

Unhappily war began, all the powers have proclaimed themselves neutral, including England, and to my great chagrin I have seen that the sympathies of the English

²⁶ "Letters of Queen Victoria," 1896-1901. Vol. III, 268-9.

government are all on the side of Spain's enemies. American vessels, unlike our own, are permitted to take on coal and supplies in British ports. The Filipino insurgents were permitted to equip and arm an expedition in Hong Kong, to aid the Americans in Manila.

My dear Aunt, please pardon my frankness. I do not intend to tell you again of all that I have suffered this year, in which I have had to struggle alone against so many misfortunes. I have faith in the Supreme Being, Who, I hope, will not desert us, and Who will give me the strength to be true to my duty until the end.

The reason for my writing you is, that since we learned that the Americans intend to bombard our coasts, we have felt obliged to fortify our seaports, and naturally, in exercising our right to do this, we have placed several batteries above Algeciras. You can imagine how astonished I was, therefore, when I learned that Sir Henry Drummond Wolff had presented a verbal note demanding an explanation for our military works! I assure you, my dear Aunt, that I was deeply hurt by the suspicion that we should even think of establishing defensive works against a friendly nation. It never entered our thoughts that England should be contemplating an attack on us when she placed formidable cannons at Gibraltar, which dominate Algeciras and its environs.

I trust, dear Aunt, that you will wish to help me in this delicate matter and that you will believe in my complete trust in your maternal goodness, which to me has always been an encouragement and a support. I cannot believe that my misfortunes have changed your sentiments towards me.

With all my heart, I pray God that you may continue to be blessed with good health, and I remain, dear Aunt, your grateful and devoted niece, MARIE CHRISTINE."

The British Government was not overly impressed by this pathetic letter: shortly after it reached Queen Victoria, Lord Salisbury went so far, in a note to Balfour, as to suggest that Algeciras be blockaded.

Queen Victoria, however, was greatly upset, and, a little later, made an imperious demand for an accounting by her ministers of a note they were preparing to send to Spain, which she regarded as an ultimatum. They succeeded in mollifying her, and she, replying to Maria Cristina, defended the attitude of strict neutrality taken by the British Government. She added, however, that since "no newspaper had been subsidized by the Govern-

ment, the press did not reflect the unanimous sentiment of the nation; for which reason the Queen Regent ought not to allow herself to be deceived by the pro-American bias of the newspapers." ²⁷

As to the matter of the fortifications at Algeciras, Queen Victoria declared, briefly and to the point: "For the present, it will be better to let things stand as they are and not to take energetic measures to fortify the coasts of your country." ²⁸

This incident is significant, and is dealt with in these pages because of the illumination it throws upon the attitude and sympathies of the English ministers in the quarrel between Spain and the United States over Cuba.

In the period just before the Spanish-American war, two movements were started in Europe both to aid Spain: one, directed by Austria, sought to bring about an amicable intervention through action by the ambassadors of the Great Powers at Washington; the other was a peace gesture by the Pope at Rome. England did not feel that she should stand aside from the effort being made by Austria, and this also was the attitude of Russia. Both governments expressed willingness to join a coalition, but by their extreme cautiousness and manifest lack of ardor, they rendered the joint action sterile of results.

At a later place in this volume, will be described the utter innocuousness which was the ultimate fate of the action led by Austria, and participated in by all the Great Powers. For the present, let us turn to the peace gesture of the Holy Pontiff.

²⁷ "Letters of Queen Victoria." 1896-1901. Vol. III, p. 280.

²⁸ *Idem*.

CHAPTER VII

THE POPE'S PEACE EFFORT

DURING all of the dispute between Spain and the United States over Cuba, the succession to St. Peter was held by a strong and able Pope, Leo XIII, shrewd in the politics of his high office, with a leaning to traditionalism, but not unable, for that reason, to appraise events realistically. The Secretary of State of the Holy See was another sacerdotal politician, Cardinal Rampolla, a man of really great intellectual endowments.

The Spanish Monarchy and the Vatican have been, for centuries, united by close bonds. The sack of Rome by the Spaniards of Carlos V, one of the most reprehensible of all the acts of vandalism committed against the Eternal City, has been erased from memory by the religious humility and the firm and militant faith of all the race of Spanish Bourbons. The monarchs of Spain, it is to be remembered, have since the times of Pope Alexander VI taken pride in their title of "Catholic Majesty."

During the Cuban revolution, the Pope never let pass an opportunity to show his predilection for Spain. At the very time when General Valeriano Weyler was doing his utmost of exterminate the rebellious Cubans, refusing to take prisoners, enclosing the unoffending Cuban peasants in concentration camps where they succumbed by thousands to starvation and disease—during all these long tragic months, the Pope's benediction fell, repeatedly, on Weyler's head. The hand of St. Peter's successor was not halted even by such disapproval of Weyler's conduct, as burst forth in Spain, and among civilized peoples elsewhere. Such was the love of the Vatican for the Spanish Monarchy, that in Rome no heed whatever was paid to the protests everywhere voiced against Weyler. The shepherd of the Catholic flock looked upon

Spaniards as his children; upon Cubans as his step-children.

In the early days of March 1898, an incident occurred which disturbed slightly the calm tranquillity of the relations between the Holy See and Spain. It appears that Cardinal Rampolla, in a conversation with an American newspaper correspondent, said that the Pontiff had, on several occasions, spoken in critical terms of Spain's course in Cuba; that he had pleaded with Spain to grant a general amnesty to the Cubans; that he had counselled Spain to cooperate with the United States in seeking a solution to the problem created by Cuba; and that, finally, he (Rampolla) was convinced that sentiment throughout Europe was on the side of the Cubans in arms. The Spanish Government immediately requested the Cardinal to repudiate the interview; and thus, without great difficulty, the incident was ended.

This occurrence reveals that the Holy See had begun to realize that the Antillean conflict was no longer a question between Spain and Cuba, but between the United States and Spain. It reveals, also, that the Vatican, with its customary perspicacity in diplomacy, the growth of centuries of participation in the always disturbed politics of the Old World, was preparing to assume an attitude of neutrality, which would later permit it to take a hand in Cuba's future status before the world, whatever it might be, and also, perhaps, to exercise a pacificatory influence which would be a service to Christianity, and would redound to the credit of the Papal Court.

Reference was made in the preceding chapter to the wish of Germany to bring about peace in Cuba and a settlement of Spain's dispute with the United States by having the Pope act as arbitrator.

It was in Germany that the suggestion of Papal intervention was first made. The purposes of the German Government in making it, were clear and precise: Germany wanted to save the Spanish Monarchy, and prevent a possible rapprochement between Spain and the Dual Alliance, which might result if Spain should fail to get the help she wanted from the Triple Alliance. Germany was opposed to becoming embroiled in any kind of trouble with the United States, and, finally, she did not

want the United States to become a World Power in consequence of a victory over Spain. The Kaiser was pulled two ways: he wished to see the Spanish monarchy conserved, but considerations in conflict with this wish had equal weight with him. Because he saw the situation in all its aspects, he was able to make sound decisions. Bülow, on the other hand, and behind Bülow, Holstein, who seems to have been in those days the directing force in Germany's foreign relations, and also all the staff of the German foreign office, had considered the problem only from the angle of Germany's immediate interests. They were convinced that the question could be settled, without danger to Europe and without damage to the Spanish monarchy, if the Pope would take a hand in the play.

With this thought in mind, von Bülow, on March 26, 1896, sent to the German Minister at the Vatican, Otto von Bülow, a telegram of instructions:

"You will inform Cardinal Kopp,¹ for use in confidence, that about a fortnight ago, when matters between Spain and America were coming to a head, the idea of Papal arbitration was suggested by us in Berlin in various quarters, and recommended as the solution which would best protect the responsibility of the Spanish Crown. The advantage of arbitration by this method would, in our opinion, lie not in its substance, but in the personality of the arbitrator, whose decision no one in Spain would question, apart, perhaps, from the Socialists. It is certainly doubtful whether America would accept the arbitrator; the American bishops would have to co-operate, and the Catholic element is not very strong in the American Congress. It might be possible for the American bishops to create a feeling between Rome and Washington regarding the substance of the decision, before the Pope was finally accepted as arbitrator."²

Not less definite and precise was Bülow's idea as to the objectives to be sought. Unfortunately for him, he regarded his plan as perfect, and made no allowance for any changes which future developments might render desirable. Spain should, at the instance of His Holiness

¹ Prince-bishop of Breslau, staying at the time in Rome.

² "German Diplomatic Documents," Methuen & Co., Ltd. London. 1929. Vol. II; 502.

the Pope, as arbitrator, give Cuba her independence. Cuba should assume the debt contracted by Spain in her name. The United States should aid Cuba financially. As for the anger which the Spanish people might feel against their monarch because of the loss of Cuba, Bülow believed this would not be dangerous, because of the fact that the Pope had acted in the matter.

The Chancellor was strongly convinced that his plan was sound, and, throwing overboard for once his habitual phlegm, he sent off another telegram, on the heels of the first, to his minister at the Vatican, giving further instructions so explicit in their character as to betray the impatience he felt at any delay in the carrying out of his proposal.

In Bülow's complacency over the virtues of his idea, he was encouraged by a despatch from Radowitz, German Ambassador to Madrid, which reported that not only the Queen, but the Spanish Ministers, felt that the question had now become, not one of the loss of Cuba, which they had come to believe inevitable, but rather of its possible consequences; they felt that the loss should be effected "in a way which should not threaten the continuance of the present monarchy, or throw the country into the arms of either a Carlist or a republican government—or both together, as happened early in the seventies."³

But at Rome, the Papal Court did not share the optimism of Bülow and Radowitz. Vatican diplomacy is not so rigid and architectonic as that of Germany. The subtle spirit of Nicholas Machiavelli, Rome's great adversary, still pervades the Vatican, a last reminder of that brilliant and fragile period known as the Italian Renaissance. The Catholic Church, when it excommunicated Machiavelli, took over the admirable realistic methods of the Florentine genius. Cardinal Secretary of State Rampolla saw clearly all the difficulties with which Bülow's plan would collide, and he was reluctant to launch the Holy See on such an adventure, without making advance preparations against every possibility of failure. Rampolla, out of the knowledge of Spain he had got from reading Spanish newspapers, and from other sources during his years of residence at Madrid as Papal

³ "German Diplomatic Documents," Vol. II, 503.

Nuncio, felt certain that, if Spain should lose Cuba, whatever the manner of the loss, the Spanish monarchy would fall.⁴ The Pope was inclined to agree with him, but was disposed to make an effort to preserve peace. Thus, acceding to the pleas of other nations, the Pope asked Madrid if Spain would consent to give Cuba her independence.⁵

Spain's official reply lacked concreteness, but, in two telegrams sent to the Pope during the last days of March, the Queen, directing her appeal more to his heart than his head, begged him to make use of his great power to save her. The Pope was deeply moved by the Queen's appeal, but he continued convinced that it would be a mistake for him to offer himself as mediator until a solution satisfactory to both sides should be found.

A little later he did take one step toward the course so anxiously desired by the Queen—and then stopped, leaving to the future to decide what further action he should take. To the Queen Regent, he sent a message of encouragement, and then started Archbishop Ireland off on a trip to Washington to act as his agent there.⁶

Between Madrid and the Vatican were two intermediaries: the Papal Nuncio to Spain, Monsignor Nava; and Spain's envoy to the Vatican. But between the Pope and the Washington Government, there existed no normal means of communication. It was to remedy this lack that Ireland, who was a friend of President McKinley, was sent to Washington.

This eminent prelate, a native of Ireland who had been brought to the United States when a child, had like so many other Irish-Americans, joined the priesthood, where he and his fellows constituted the strongest group among the Catholic clergy in America. A man of great energy, educated in France and Italy, an ardent American patriot, modern in his ideas but devotedly attached, nevertheless, to Pope Leo XIII—Ireland was an ideal choice for the

4. "German Diplomatic Documents." Vol. II, 505. Cipher despatch from Otto von Bülow to Bernard von Bülow, reporting a conversation had by the former with Cardinal Secretary of State Rampolla.

5. "German Diplomatic Documents." Vol. II, 505. Reported in a letter from the Cardinal Secretary of State to Otto von Bülow.

6. Spanish Archives. Telegram from the Spanish Ambassador at the Holy See to the Spanish Minister of State, April 3, 1898.

difficult role assigned him. And, in addition to his admirable personal qualities, Ireland had also the advantage of being on intimate terms with President McKinley, who, on one occasion, spoke of him as "the most eminent representative of American patriotism and eloquence."

Ireland, bubbling over with zeal, rushed to the White House to begin his work of faith. To his satisfaction, he found that the ground had been fertilized in advance for him. The President was opposed to war, and was struggling against the pressure being brought to bear on him. If the Pope could get Spain to give Cuba her freedom, the United States would be grateful to him. Naturally, it was essential that the Pope should exercise great care in whatever action he undertook; but if he could settle the major question, everything else would work out all right in the end.

But Radowitz had been in error, when he informed Bülow that Spain would give Cuba her independence. Opinion in Spain had not changed, as he believed, or at least the Spanish Government had found itself, when forced to make a decision, lacking the courage to accept a solution which, while it would be unpopular, would save the nation from a hopeless war, and would effectuate the inevitable separation of colony from mother country on terms and conditions very much to Spain's advantage. That Spain would accept no arbitration having as a condition the independence of Cuba, was the reply despatched by the Papal Nuncio to Spain, to a telegram of inquiry from the Vatican Secretary of State.

The news of Spain's intransigence, when it reached Rome, produced an atmosphere of stupefaction in the halls of the Vatican. Only Rampolla, who knew Spain, and knew that ductility is a quality lacking in the make-up of Spanish governments, was not surprised. Unshakable determination, burning faith, the spirit of all or nothing—these seem to be the Spaniard's heritage from ancient Iberia.

Berlin, too, was distressed by the collapse of the plan in which Bülow had believed as a sure means of saving the Spanish monarchy. To the Kaiser, notice of Spain's attitude came when, as was the customary procedure with important documents, a telegram from the German Am-

bassador at Madrid was shown him. On the margin of the telegram he wrote: "Then there is no way of helping them! They will lose Cuba all the same!"⁷

At Washington, meanwhile, the tension grew hourly. Important leaders of both major parties were against war, but the bulk of Congress, including all the younger men, were determined on it. Senators belonging to the so-called Republican "Old Guard"—Hanna, Spooner, Aldrich, Fairbanks—were busy trying to bring into line enough of their colleagues to form a third of the Senate, so as to uphold the President's veto of a war resolution. However, even the Secretary of War, a very loyal friend of President McKinley, felt that any further delay by the President in coming out for war, would amount to defiance of the nation's will.⁸

From the lips of Senator Claud Swanson, who was, in the late nineties, a Democratic member of the House of Representatives, the author has heard the story of the dramatic happenings in the American Congress during those fateful days of late March and early April of 1898. Nothing could prevent war. Republicans and Democrats alike were for it. So strong was the war sentiment, that there was danger of the always respected authority of the President being flouted.

Never since that time has the United States witnessed such excitement. Three years of mistakes by Spain, mistakes skilfully thrust upon the attention of the impressionable American public by, among others, the bold and energetic young newspaper publisher, William Randolph Hearst, had come to fruition.

Resisting the pressure of Congress and of public opinion, President McKinley kept seeking some solution of the crisis that might avert war. But from the end of March onward he, too, felt that war was inevitable. However, he continued to hope for a providential turn in events, and he never ceased in his efforts to find a peaceful solution. He suggested to Spain that she cease hostilities against Cuba. Spain stubbornly refused, for a

⁷ "German Diplomatic Documents," Vol. II; p. 506.

⁸ "Life of William McKinley," Charles S. Olcott. Vol. II; p. 28.

reason which Minister Woodford described in a telegram to the President: "The Spanish Ministers wish to accede, but lack the will to do so. The pride of the Minister of State will not permit him to propose an armistice."⁹

It is deserving of note that Spain, a monarchy not overly democratic during the period under review, should have had a government that could not resist the popular will, nor the dictation of public opinion, which the accident of circumstances had rendered hostile. In the United States, on the other hand, a nation whose political institutions are democratic, a President lacking a majority in either House of Congress, and without public opinion in his support, went his way unshaken by the hysteria that surrounded him, carrying through with calm serenity the program he had laid out for himself, indifferent alike to the actions of his parliament, and to the excited clamor of the mob. One might venture the opinion, in explanation of this paradox, that the measure of authority which a government can exercise is in direct ratio to the legitimacy of its foundation, legitimacy being defined as the concordance of political institutions with the current political ideas having universal acceptance.

Monsignor Ireland, in carrying out his mission, reported to the Holy See, after a visit to the President, that McKinley's intentions were of the best, but that he needed "help" in his efforts to prevent war. In the minds of McKinley and Ireland, the word "help" signified a wish that Spain should act in a way calculated to calm the tremendously overwrought state of mind of the American public; in other words, that Spain should cede voluntarily, what she would later, in any event, have to give up under duress, and on terms much less advantageous to her. However, because of the conflicting psychologies of peoples, a condition which ought never to be overlooked by any diplomat or other intermediary between nations, the word "help" was not understood correctly at the Vatican, or by the Spanish Ambassador at the Holy See, to whom a cable from Ireland, telling of his conversation with the President, was duly shown.

⁹ "Life of William McKinley," Charles S. Olcott. Vol. II; 23.

President McKinley's expression was interpreted as a plea for diplomatic aid by the Pope; in short, a plea that the Pope accept the role of arbitrator.

On this erroneous interpretation being telegraphed to Madrid, Minister of State Gullon lost no time in informing the governments of the Great Powers that the Government of the United States had solicited intervention by the Pope.¹⁰

The Great Powers congratulated Spain on her success. Always, in all great tragedies, there is a comic note!

The mistake was, of course, promptly corrected. To the Pope the incident was discouraging, but he still continued, because of his sincere affection for Spain, to make use of Ireland in a vague effort to avert war, and Ireland, for the sole reason, and with the sole excuse, that he was a friend of the President of the United States, continued on in Washington.

Ireland's activities, in the stage they now entered, were directed towards bringing about the suspension of hostilities by Spain, in the hope that, thereby, indignation against Spain in the United States would be modified. The Madrid Government, however, always vacillating, undid all the labor of the Catholic bishop: Spain, it developed, would consent to an armistice, but the terms of the armistice must be fixed in advance, and the United States must agree to certain conditions. The time when such tactics might have been efficacious, had long passed by. The situation of Spain was now an impossible one. She had petitioned the Great Powers to use their good offices in her behalf, and, after they had done so, she put them in a compromising light by demanding that, in exchange for granting an armistice to the Cubans, the United States must withdraw its war vessels from Cuban waters. This was folly. Spain's only chance, at this late date, of escaping a war with the United States, was to declare immediately an unconditional armistice, before President McKinley should send his already prepared War Message to Congress.

Distracted, Monsignor Ireland turned to the French Government, and implored it to explain to Spain the course that must be taken. To Rampolla, also, he cabled

¹⁰ Spanish Archives. Docket 37.

that war could now be prevented only by Spain's immediate cessation of hostilities in Cuba. But despite all that was done, the Spanish Government could bring itself to make a decision only after too much precious time had passed, and at the cost of much urging.¹¹

On April 9, the Spanish Ambassador at the Holy See telegraphed to Madrid:

"Both his Eminence [Rampolla] and the Pope are greatly disturbed over the gravity of the situation, but can suggest no other means to preserve peace than by the suspension of hostilities in Cuba. If Spain should decree an armistice it could be conditional on abstention from attack by the Cubans. If the rebels should not respect the armistice, Spain would at least have demonstrated her willingness for peace, and the United States would be morally obligated to withhold aid from the revolutionists. The Great Powers, Cardinal Rampolla says, are making efforts to prevent war, and so far they have shown sympathy for Spain. The Pope begs the Government of Her Majesty to consider the grave consequences which war might have for many interests, and says that if war is avoided, everything else can be arranged. The urgent need is that an armistice be declared; other questions can be dealt with later."¹²

On this same day, April 9, the Minister of State at Madrid sent telegraphic instructions to the Spanish Ambassador at the Vatican to advise the Vatican that Spain had assented to "the earnest, noble, and disinterested petition of the Holy Father" to suspend hostilities, and that an order to this effect had been sent to the Marshal of the Spanish armies in Cuba. In this telegram Minister Gullon also stated that the ambassadors of the six Great Powers of Europe had called on him that morning and had expressed approval of the Pope's purpose; and he concluded by requesting that His Holiness be informed that the Spanish Government had confidence that he "would be vigilant in seeing that our just demands for compensation are satisfied, and that the prestige of this Catholic nation be not impaired."¹³

¹¹ Spanish Archives. Docket 37. Telegram from the Spanish Ambassador at the Holy See to the Minister of State at Madrid, April 6, 1898.

¹² Spanish Archives. Docket 37.

¹³ Spanish Archives. Docket 37.

Monsignor Ireland was delighted by Spain's act and telegraphed from Washington that "peace is assured." The Emperor of Austria-Hungary congratulated the Pope.¹⁴ The other Powers congratulated the Queen Regent and her Ministers. For a moment, Europe believed that the threat of war had been dissipated, and everywhere there was relieved satisfaction. For Spain, this was the last turn of the wheel. Always, before an impending catastrophe occurs, there is a moment when hope burns brightly.

Spain's decision came too late. In Cuba, when word got about that an armistice was in effect, there was a rush to join the ranks of the rebels. With eventual independence now a practical certainty, everybody wanted to join the Army of Liberty. In less than a week the size of the Cuban army jumped from thirty to sixty thousand men.

In the United States, war sentiment was at fever pitch. Crowds paraded the streets; patriotic speeches, in Congress and elsewhere, were cheered wildly. A steady stream of Congressmen and Senators passed through the White House, urging President McKinley to action, and warning him that his delay would prove hurtful to himself and a disservice to the country.¹⁵ McKinley finally, on April 4, decided for war, but not for a week did he send to Congress his War Message asking for power "to take measures and to secure a full and final termination of hostilities . . . and to secure the establishment of a stable government . . . and to use the military and naval forces of the United States as may be necessary for these purposes."¹⁶

Until April 16, the Pope continued a fumbling search for a solution to the crisis, but without practical results. On the day when, his last hope gone, he gave up the effort as futile, Minister Gullon made of him the extraordinary request that he indicate "to the Great Powers

¹⁴ "Osservatore Romano," official organ of the Holy See. April 13, 1898.

¹⁵ "Life of McKinley." Olcott. Page 29.

¹⁶ Congressional Record.

that one of the best ways of preventing war would be for them to make a naval demonstration" against the United States.¹⁷

Thus the efforts of the Pope in the whole dispute between Spain and the United States, amounted to no more than a request to Spain to end hostilities in Cuba. At no time did the head of the Catholic Church assume the character of arbitrator. The opinion was general in Washington that, in his attempts at mediation, the Pope had shown neither force nor determination. This was commented on in a report sent by the German Ambassador at Washington to his home government: "Little importance is attributed here to the Pope's peace efforts. There has been no direct exchange of communications between him and this Government, and if there had been, the effect would have been bad. Washington would, however, have been grateful to the Pope if he could have induced Spain to concede, and the revolutionists to accept, an armistice."¹⁸

Before closing this chapter it may not be amiss to reproduce here, in the character purely of diplomatic curiosities, two letters sent by Mr. William F. Draper, American Ambassador to Rome, to Secretary of State John Sherman, on April 6th and 7th, 1898:¹⁹

"Sir: I beg leave to inform you that last evening I received a call from a gentleman who desired to read me a paper. I consented, and the substance seems of sufficient interest to place on file.

The paper purported to be a semi-official statement from the Vatican, concerning the mediation between our country and Spain, which has been talked of in the papers for the last few days. It was stated that great regret was felt that the matter had gotten into the public prints; that no mediation had been asked for by the United States, that the Church authorities felt that by making representations to both countries, something might be done in the interest of preserving peace; that representations were made in Spain through Papal officers there; and that Archbishop Ireland was authorized to make similar representations at Washington. It was added that it was not supposed that the U. S.

¹⁷ Spanish Archives. Docket 37.

¹⁸ "German Diplomatic Documents." Vol. II, p. 508.

¹⁹ U. S. State Department Archives.

would accept the Pope as mediator; and that such a proposition would not be made from the Vatican, as the Vatican knew it would not be accepted by the U. S., and might be of detriment, both to our country and to the Catholic Church in America.

After reading his paper the gentleman retired, taking it with him. I do not know whether he acted with authority or not, and as I have no official relations with the Vatican, I have thought best to make no investigations or inquiries."

It is apparent that the person who approached the Ambassador was well up on current events, and that he was acting in the capacity of an agent of the Vatican, where he was probably regarded with trust. An incident similar to that described, occurring the following morning, was dealt with in Ambassador Draper's second letter:

"Sir: I have the honor to inform you that this morning, during my reception hour, I had a call from another gentleman who assumed to speak for the Vatican, his name being Ferdinando de Bojani, I do not know who he is, nor what his position is; but I shall make inquiry to ascertain if possible. He asked if I had any objection to hearing what he had to say, and I told him I had not if he did not expect to hear anything from me.

Mr. de Bojani then said substantially that the Pope felt that he had reason to complain of Spain in the negotiations he is attempting, in two particulars, (1) that the Spanish Government had given out that the U. S. had asked for, or agreed to, a mediation by the Pope, which was uncertain; (2) that while the Pope asked Spain to grant an armistice to the Cuban insurgents, they had not done that, but had made an appeal through the autonomous government of Cuba, urging the insurgents to lay down their arms, and to join in building up the plan of home rule, promising modification of the present plan if needed or practical.

This so nearly coincided with a dispatch which I received from the Department last night, that I was greatly surprised, but made no comment. Mr. de Bojani, continuing, announced that several European Governments were to join with the Pope in making representations, both to Spain and the United States, with the end of preserving peace, and he added that the Vatican had news this morning that the President's Message, which it was supposed would favor Cuban independence, and intervention, would not be sent

in today, April 6th, as expected, nor for some days yet, if indeed a Message on that line was ever sent in.

I told my informant that I was not at liberty to communicate such news as I had, although as a matter of fact I have no news on this subject; and if what he tells me is true, the Vatican has earlier knowledge of the shape of affairs at Washington than the American Ambassador at Rome. If Mr. de Bojani's information proves correct, I shall take especial interest in his communications hereafter. If anything of importance is communicated to me by him, I will forward it to the State Department.

It seems evident to me, aside from the special interviews that I have reported, that the Vatican is endeavoring to extend its operations outside of spiritual work."

This American diplomat seems to have had an existence of happy and splendid isolation at Rome.

CHAPTER VIII

ACTION IN WASHINGTON

AUSTRIA'S plan for getting the Powers to unite in making representations of a diplomatic character to the American Government, made but halting progress. On April 3, Count Goluchowski reported to Ambassador Hoyos that "Russia and Italy favor a joint effort, and there is no doubt about Germany and France. England also will join, but on condition that her Ambassador in Washington shall first discuss the matter of friendly mediation by the Powers with the American State Department."¹

Thus while Monsignor Ireland was working as the unofficial agent of the Pope, the Great Powers were preparing a joint action, limited in its objectives but dangerous because of the question with which it dealt. All six Powers were more or less willing to take the step, not wishing to deny to Spain this *successo di stima*, to use the phrase of the theater. However, there was a difference of opinion as to the scope the action should have and none of the Powers, with the exception of Austria, was inclined to do anything hazardous. But any action such as the one contemplated was hazardous, nonetheless.

Germany, now more than ever, held rigidly to the attitude she had adopted at the beginning. Bülow had won the Kaiser to his view, and although the Kaiser was still diligent in Spain's behalf, calling on the Russian Ambassador very early in the morning—one of his little tricks when he was after something—and sending letters to the Czar, in an effort to move Russia to sympathy for Spain—he was fully convinced that Spain's hold on Cuba had been finally and definitely broken.

In a conversation Bülow had with Mendez Vigo on

¹ Spanish Archives. Docket 37.

April 5, he said candidly: "I have no advice to give you, officially. My personal view, however, is, that if I had the honor to be Spain's Foreign Minister, I should have given the Pope *carte blanche* in order to prevent war with America. It would be acting disloyally if I should allow Your Excellency to believe there was any real prospect of active intervention by the Powers in Spain's favor."²

Mendez Vigo, on reporting this conversation to his Government, mentioned the frankness with which Bülow expressed himself, and told of other statements by Bülow which are not to be found in Bülow's notes in the published German diplomatic documents. Bülow told him, Mendez Vigo said: "You are isolated, because everybody wants to be pleasant to the United States, or, at any rate, nobody wants to arouse America's anger; the United States is a rich country, against which you simply cannot sustain a war; I admire the courage Spain has shown, but I would admire more a display of practical common sense."

To these brusque words of Bülow, which could leave no possible doubt as to Germany's attitude, Mendez Vigo did not attribute their true significance, as is shown by the tone of his despatch to Madrid, nor did he fully understand their import, coming as they did from the lips of Germany's Foreign Minister. He replied to Bülow that Spain would fight for her honor, as she had done, successfully, many times in the past.³

In St. Peterburg, things never at any time took definite shape. The semi-Asiatic trait of the Slav, of neither assenting nor dissenting, failed to satisfy Spain, but did not destroy her hope. Villagonzalo, for all his social and official contacts, was unable to report progress of any kind. On April 2, Count Mouravieff, Secretary of State, told him that before a decision could be reached, it was requisite that the Austrian Chancellor should state in precise terms to the governments of the European Powers, the kind of action he contemplated taking with respect to the projected joint diplomatic action at Wash-

² "German Diplomatic Documents." Vol. II, p. 507.

³ Spanish Archives. Docket 37.

ington.⁴ After some delay, Austria made the statement asked for, but still Mouravieff refused to commit himself. At Madrid, Gullon became impatient. On April 6, he telegraphed Villagonzalo instructing him to renew his efforts with Mouravieff: "Now that the Russian Government is fully informed about the Austrian formula for getting the long-wished-for intervention of the Powers in the dispute with the United States, it is urgently necessary that, if Count Mouravieff approves the Austrian plan, he should send instructions to the Russian Ambassador in Washington to join in carrying it out."⁵

The Russian Minister, continuing to delay taking action, aroused a wild suspicion in Madrid that he was personally hostile to Spain, and so Madrid resolved to carry an appeal over his head to the Czar.⁶

Mouravieff was a man of broad culture and reflective habit, in whose veins flowed the blood of a Decembrist rebel, and also that of the "executioner of Lithuania." In his sympathies he was strongly monarchical, but at the same time he was foremost among the Russian intellectuals who appraised events realistically, and saw with clear vision the dangers which the changes taking place in the political ideology of the world, were preparing for his country and for the Czarist dynasty. Count Mouravieff was not unfriendly to Spain, but he was a prudent man, and disliked taking unnecessary risks. From the first he had adopted the attitude which Russia's situation made imperative. He never for a moment lost sight of the questions affecting his country in the Far East, such as the occupation of Port Arthur, conflict with the British, etc., etc. Towards the end of March, he spoke frankly of Russia's situation in a talk with the American Ambassador to St. Petersburg, who reported the conversation to the Department of State at Washington.⁷

"Count Mouravieff confidentially informs me that both the Spanish Ambassador and the Austrian Ambassador have

⁴ Spanish Archives. Docket 37. Telegram from Villagonzalo to Gullon.

⁵ Spanish Archives. Docket 37.

⁶ Spanish Archives. Docket 37. Telegram from Gullon to the Spanish Ambassador at Vienna.

⁷ United States State Department Archives.

asked whether the Russian Government would favor, actively, arbitration between Spain and our Government regarding Cuban situation to which he replied discouragingly."

Finally the Great Powers, after giving consideration to the Austrian and other proposals, reached an agreement to take joint action through the medium of a note, signed by all the Washington Ambassadors of the Great Powers, and delivered in a body to President McKinley. This was on April 6. Serious consequences might have been provoked by this timid gesture, had it not been for the prudence of President McKinley, and the support he received from England, which happily obviated all danger.

The note read:

"The undersigned representatives of Germany, Austria-Hungary, France, Great Britain, Italy, and Russia, duly authorized in that behalf, address, in the name of their respective Governments, a pressing appeal to the feelings of humanity and moderation of the President and of the American people in their existing differences with Spain. They earnestly hope that further negotiations will lead to an agreement which, while securing the maintenance of peace, will afford all necessary guaranties for the reestablishment of order in Cuba,

The Powers do not doubt that the humanitarian and purely disinterested character of this representation will be fully recognized and appreciated by the American nation.

Julian Pauncefote,	For Great Britain
Holleben,	For Germany
Jules Cambon,	For France
Von Hengelmüller,	For Austria-Hungary
De Wollant,	For Russia
G. C. Vinci,	For Italy"

Following the ceremony of presentation and after listening to the reading of the statement, President McKinley replied:

"The Government of the United States recognizes the good will which has prompted the friendly communication of the representatives of Germany, Austria-Hungary, France, Great

* Spanish Archives. Docket 42.

Britain, Italy, and Russia, as set forth in the address of your excellencies, and shares the hope therein expressed that the outcome of the situation in Cuba may be the maintenance of peace between the United States and Spain by affording the necessary guaranties for the reestablishment of order in the island, so terminating the chronic condition of disturbance there, which so deeply injures the interests, and menaces the tranquillity, of the American nation by the character and consequences of the struggle thus kept up at our doors, besides shocking its sentiment of humanity.

The Government of the United States appreciates the humanitarian and disinterested character of the communication now made on behalf of the powers named, and, for its part, is confident that equal appreciation will be shown for its own earnest and unselfish endeavors to fulfill a duty to humanity by ending a situation, the indefinite prolongation of which has become insufferable."⁹

As is patent, the reply of the President was amiable, and, at the same time, firm. But the character of the action that had been taken was extremely grave, and it was well within the possibilities that it might precipitate a terrible crisis. This collective act of the Powers, this visit of all the Ambassadors to the White House, this document signed by the representatives of the European areopago, might well have caused excited alarm, if the American chancellery had not been apprised beforehand that the contemplated action was without serious importance. As we know, the two documents had been read by both parties, prior to the meeting at the White House. We also know that the American State Department had objected to the phrasing of the note in its original form, and that changes had been made in it to suit America's wishes. Finally, Sir Julian Pauncefoot had asked the American Government, prior to the delivery of the note, if the latter disapproved the action, and had been assured that the American Government did not object.

Finally, the State Department at Washington knew with certainty that England would not interfere in America's plans. In addition to the reports, all favorable, that reached the Secretary of State from London,

⁹ "Foreign Relations of the United States," State Department, Washington. 1898.

the tone of the British press, very different from what it had been previously, reflected the friendly feeling which the English people had for the United States. John Hay, at the time Ambassador at London, wrote Senator Lodge, April 5: ¹⁰

"I do not know whether you especially value the friendship and sympathy of this country [England]. I think it important and desirable in the present state of things, as it is the only European country whose sympathies are not openly against us. We will not waste time in discussing whether the origin of this feeling is wholly selfish or not. Its existence is beyond question. I find it wherever I go—not only in the press, but in private conversation. For the first time in my life, I find the "drawing-room" sentiment altogether with us. If we wanted it—which, of course, we do not—we could have the practical assistance of the British Navy—on the *do ut des* principle, naturally."

On the sixth; that is, the day after writing this letter, Hay sent a cable to the Department: ¹¹

"I called upon Mr. Balfour by appointment today at half past twelve. I conveyed to him verbally your thanks for the courtesy shown in the offer of the British Ambassador at Madrid to take charge, in case of necessity, of our legation in that city, and told him I would send him a note to the same effect later in the day. I then asked him, in accordance with your instructions, if the British Government would authorize their consuls in Spanish territory to take charge of American consular archives, if the occasion should arise. He thought there would be no objection to this course, but said he would let me know during the day.

I had some further conversation with him in regard to pending matters, in all of which his tone was expressive of a sincere sympathy with the President and the people of the United States, in the trying circumstances of the last few weeks.

He told me that the Government of Great Britain had formally instructed Sir Julian Pauncefoot to be guided by the wishes of the President, in any action he might take or not take in the direction of any collective representation of

¹⁰ "The Life and Letters of John Hay," William Roscoe Thayer. Houghton Mifflin Co., New York. 1915. Vol. II, p. 165.

¹¹ U. S. State Dept. Archives.

the Diplomatic body in Washington. He then read me part of a dispatch from Sir Julian Pauncefote, indicating that some such representation would be made today, with the assent of the President and the Department of State. This was somewhat unexpected news to him, for he repeated his assurance that neither here nor in Washington did the British Government propose to take any steps which would not be acceptable to the Government of the United States."

It seems also that Chamberlain, Colonial Minister, who was the chief of a faction of Liberals who had deserted and gone over to the Conservatives, threatened that, if the British Government did anything unfriendly to the United States, he would resign from the Cabinet in protest. Chamberlain at this time was in the midst of his plans of empire, one of the most important British policies of the past fifty years, and his retirement would have been a calamity. Also, Britain, in recognition of and deference to the new ideas that had begun to find lodging in men's minds everywhere, had instituted a more tolerant note in its dealings with overseas dependencies. In passing, it may be noted that Queen Victoria in her old age, and during the very year when the Spanish-American dispute reached its climax, pointed out two of the new principles of tolerance and moderation that had come to have general acceptance. In describing in her diary a conversation had with Lord James on March 21, 1898, she wrote: ¹² "I observed I could not understand why nobody was to have anything anywhere but ourselves, in which he quite concurred."

On another occasion, speaking of the duties of the Viceroy of India, she remarked: ¹³ "They [the Natives of India] must of course *feel* that we are masters, but it should be done kindly and not offensively, which alas! is so often the case."

The aged Queen knew politics well, and she also knew the psychology of her race, and that of man in the mass.

Returning now to the scene at the White House: It is worthy of note that, after the reading of the statements, President McKinley remarked, in a conversation that fol-

¹² "Letters of Queen Victoria." 1896-1901. Vol. III, p. 237.

¹³ "Letters of Queen Victoria." 1896-1901. Vol. III, p. 251.

lowed, that no one had done more for peace than he.¹⁴ And the envoys of the Great Powers judged that the President had been pleased by the joint note, and believed that it would do good.¹⁵ They also believed that the delay in transmitting the President's War Message to Congress had been due to their action. Delusions of diplomats, of a kind often met with!

What had actually happened, as has been explained earlier in the preceding chapter, was that the President had, after a period of long uncertainty, come to believe that there was no way to prevent war. This had become his firm conviction, and the delay in sending the Message to Congress was due, not to the note of the Powers, but to another cause entirely. On a day of great tension at the White House, McKinley was seated at his desk, with the Message before him, complete and ready for his signature. To the people assembled about him, he said that Consul-General Fitzhugh Lee at Havana had advised him that the lives of Americans in Cuba would be endangered if a declaration of war should be made before they had a chance to leave, and that he was awaiting further word from Lee about their evacuation. Some of those present, believing the President's declaration merely another evasion, were arguing that the President should sign the Message, when a cipher despatch from Lee arrived. This stated that there were still Americans in Cuba who were in danger. The President was not insensible to the tremendous responsibilities resting upon him, as was shown by the pallor of his countenance, but, rising to his feet, he pointed to the Message on his desk and said, "This document will not go Congress so long as there is a single American in danger in Cuba." Then turning to his secretary, he added, "Put this paper away in the safe until I call for it."¹⁶

Spain quickly realized the futility of the action taken by the Great Powers, and events continued to rush on

¹⁴ Cable from the Italian Minister to the Minister of Foreign Relations at Rome. Italian Documents.

¹⁵ The Italian, French, and German documents agree on this point.

¹⁶ "Life of McKinley," Olcott. Vol. II, p. 29.

apace, so that doubt could no longer be entertained that war was unavoidable. While Spain did not wish war, she did not wish, either, to grant independence to Cuba. Indeed, the power to take such a step no longer rested in the hands of the Spanish Government, for the management of the nation's foreign relations had, to all practical intents, been taken over by the mob in the streets.

It is a stratagem which governments practice at their peril, when they wish to make others believe that popular support is with them, to stir up the mob spirit, or at least not to take repressive measures against mob demonstrations in their early stages, with the result, all too often, that the governments themselves come under the domination of the very turbulence they have fomented or encouraged.

It is true that peoples should have the right to decide their own fate, especially at times of grave crisis. But the decision ought, in common sense, to be made only after sober reflection, and not to the accompaniment of rabble hysteria. Also, at times of crisis, there should arise men who will speak the truth, however disagreeable the truth may be, regardless of the risk to their future and to their very lives. The Greek, Phocion—who later fought with valor and skill against Philip of Macedon—set the model for such a course when, on the eve of war, in despite of the protests of all Athens, he pleaded for peace and understanding.

Spain had a Phocion in Pi y Margall, but the great Republican was but a *vox clamans in deserto*. Any account of the tragic collision between Spain and the United States would be incomplete, if it did not record the lofty sentiments expressed in an open letter of Pi y Margall, addressed to the American people, and found among his papers after his death. He said, in part: ¹⁷

"To thee, Great Republic of the North, I address myself, from a nation that insults and hates thee for aiding the rebellion in Cuba. But if, because of Cuba, there is cause to reproach thee, it is for thy laggardliness and thy lack of passion. In casting off the yoke which England had about

¹⁷ "Las Grandes Conmociones Politicas del Siglo XIX en Espana," Francisco Pi y Margall and Francisco Pi y Arsuaga. Casa Editorial Seguí, Barcelona. 1933. P. 322 et seq.

thy neck, aid was given thee by France and Spain. Thou canst not, in thy turn, look with indifference upon others who struggle for their liberty, but thou must aid them even, if necessary, with thy sword, for the duty thou owest to them is greater than that which France and Spain owed to thee." ¹⁸

Standing with Pi y Margall, were only a handful of valorous youths, among them Alejandro Lerroux, then imprisoned for having championed the revolution in Cuba, a course which he had believed both just and wise. But the statesmen of Spain, and even the grandiloquent orator, Castelar, first President of the Spanish Republic, were under the spell of the mob. Castelar, seizing the opportunity offered by the action of the American Congress in recognizing the revolutionary government of Cuba, addressed himself to the people of the United States in these extraordinary terms:

"If you give support to your Congress we will hate you, for the duty of Spaniards, if we are to be patriotic, is to love and to hate as our fatherland loves and hates. It is not possible that your First Magistrate will give ear to your Congress. To treat as armies [as your Congress has done] mobs without discipline and without order; as a nation and government, bands of roving freebooters; as a parliament, groups of homeless nomads; as a war fleet, filibustering ships without allies and without banners—to flout, in such manner, all the principles of human justice in order to give an appearance of honesty to an impertinent intrusion into quarrels within our private sovereignty; to foment a criminal revolution which bases all its hopes on help from without; to strive to subjugate Cuba by taking advantage of its deluded striving for an illusory independence; to assail the mother country of all the nations of America—to do all this would be an error and a collective crime so monstrous, that if your representatives in Congress perpetrate it, you will have to pay dearly, for not God nor humanity can tolerate such Caesaric and despotic assaults by brute force and commercial greed against universal justice." ¹⁹

¹⁸ Wishing to put into the English translation of Pi y Margall's sonorous phrases as much as possible of the atmosphere that surrounds them in the original Spanish, I have retained the author's use of the second person.—Translator.

¹⁹ "Las Grandes Conmociones Políticas del Siglo XIX en España," Francisco Pi y Margall y Francisco Pi y Arsuaga. Casa Editorial Seguí, Barcelona. 1933. P. 322 et seq.

Sonorous words which ignored the facts, as was true of all that came from the mouth of this statesman who was capable of reaching the farthestmost heights of oratory, but was inept in all else. The pseudo-Republican whom the masses of Spain revered above all others, and who was regarded by the rest of Europe as the greatest orator of his age, was actually an Anacreon without graces, a Homer without the epic spirit.

As happens often, the enthusiasm for war in Spain was out of keeping with the preparations that were made for fighting. The Government of Spain seems to have put its trust wholly in help to come from outside, intervention by the Great Powers. The complete neglect of war preparations is a sad page in Spain's history, comparable only to the inactivity of the Spanish forces in Cuba after war had been declared. Despite Marshall Blanco's not very convincing show of wanting to fight, after Santiago de Cuba had fallen to American and Cuban troops almost without a struggle, the end came, abruptly and before much blood had been shed.²⁰

One is moved by the agony of spirit and the patriotic warnings uttered by Admiral Cervera before the war began, but after it had come to be viewed as inevitable. On February 26, 1898, this chief of the Spanish squadron, who was later taken prisoner in the naval battle off Santiago, sent to the Minister of the Admiralty a report in which he explained that Spain lacked almost everything, and that it would be ridiculous to send warships without cannon, without munitions, without coal, to fight 4,000 miles away from their base. On this same day he wrote in a personal letter to his superior:

"For a long time I have been anxious about all this. I ask myself if it is right for me to keep silent, and accept my share of the responsibility for an adventure which, if it comes off, will mean the complete ruin of Spain—and all this for an island which was once ours, but is not so any longer. Even if we did not lose Cuba as one of the results of war, she is lost to us anyhow by the logic of facts, and all we shall have done will be to sacrifice our young men to bullets and disease, in defense of an ideal which now has become

²⁰ "Duque de Tetuán," Marques de Lema. Pages 133-4.

fantastic. I believe more. I believe that the Queen and all the Cabinet ought to know how I feel about this matter." ²¹

The Minister of the Admiralty, Sr. Segismundo Bermejo, knew the situation and did what he could to better it. He also would have preferred to avoid war. "But," he replied to Cervera, "consider how impressionable our people are, and the trouble we should have with a press which it is impossible to control." ²²

In all Spain there was such confusion, that even men of common sense in Madrid, listening to the raucous voices of those patriots known to all countries, who clamor for war but fail to offer themselves as recruits, lost their balance. General Bermeja himself was swept off his feet, and at one time issued orders that a part of the Spanish fleet, in numbers comparing as 1 to 3 with the American vessels, should sail for the United States, there to (1) defend the islands of Cuba and Porto Rico; (2) blockade American ports in the Gulf of Mexico; (3) destroy the naval base at Key West; and, finally, (4) maintain also, if possible, a blockade of all the American ports along the Atlantic Coast! ²³ To which Cervera felt obliged to reply, with a sincerity and seriousness which do him honor: "It is a delirious dream to suppose that, with this force, weakened by so long a war [with Cuba], we can maintain a blockade of any American port. War against the United States must be defensive, unless allies come to our aid, in which case the tables might be turned." ²⁴

The *leit-motif* was foreign help. So intense, so vital was this hope, that it caused men to forget that preparations must be made. The sad record of failure and disillusionment of the preceding several years had been erased from the minds of all. The one and only hope lay beyond the frontiers.

If Spain had concentrated in Cuba, her army amounting in all to close to 200,000 men, and if she had supplied it with munitions—the American blockade was not very effective—she would have made the task of the American

²¹ "Duque de Tetuán," p. 153.

²² "Duque de Tetuán," p. 156.

²³ "Duque de Tetuán," p. 152.

²⁴ "Duque de Tetuán," p. 150.

and Cuban forces infinitely more difficult. The history of this war has never been written in its entirety; the army staffs of both countries can tell interesting stories about the deficiencies in preparation on one side, and the complete failure to take a warlike stand on the other.

CHAPTER IX

A LAST EFFORT FAILS

FOLLOWING upon a last plea from Spain, the Austrian Government, on April 11, 1898, proposed once again to the Powers that action be taken at Washington in Spain's behalf. This time the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs was highly optimistic of success, feeling that, as a consequence of the note presented to President McKinley by the ambassadors on April 6, intervention by Europe in the conflict was practically under way.¹ Mediation would in any case be useful, Goluchowski believed, because it would help to prevent war, or, if war came, it would win for Spain the sympathy of the civilized world. In carrying out his project, the Foreign Minister cabled to the Austrian ambassador to Washington, instructing him to join with the other envoys there in putting more energetic pressure on the American Government; and then in representations to the Powers he tried to rally them to his support.

None too enthusiastically, the Italian Government, urged to its decision by the shrewd old diplomat, Count Nigra—he had been Cavour's secretary and had helped with Prince Metternich, Austrian Ambassador to France in 1870, the flight of the Empress Eugénie—offered to join with Austria, on condition that "all the Powers participate, and that, in addition, before the project is put in effect, the American Government must be sounded out to determine whether the United States will adopt an attitude embarrassing to Europe."²

Again, as before, the question arose as to the form the action should take. Austria thought that Hanotaux, French Foreign Minister, should prepare another note

¹ Italian documents.

² Italian documents. Telegram from the Italian ambassador to Vienna to the Minister of Foreign Affairs at Rome.

to Washington, which all would sign; this idea got a cool reception, and was quickly dropped.³ Meanwhile, events were crowding one upon another, with war looming up with more and more certainty and imminence. From now on, control of whatever step should be agreed upon had, of necessity, to be left with the ambassadors at Washington.

What occurred now at the American capital is a matter extremely difficult to describe clearly and accurately. In 1902, when a violent international controversy broke out about the subject, statements were published by several of the diplomats who had taken part in the action, dealing with the part played by the English Ambassador. From these it appears that a meeting had been held by the Washington envoys—a fact which nobody has questioned. But dispute arose over what happened at the meeting. Considerable light is thrown on the question by the documents I have examined, but unfortunately these do not clear away the confusion entirely. What is certain is that on April 15, the ambassadors of the Great Powers met at the British Embassy, where they prepared a joint note, the terms of which, if they had become known, would have provoked outraged resentment in the United States. One phrase from the note—the Powers “cannot give their approval to armed intervention [by the United States in the Spanish-Cuban conflict] which seems to be entirely unjustified”—would have been extremely mortifying to the amour propre of the people of the United States.

It is evident, hence, that Spain came very close to achieving the goal towards which she had been working so sedulously, because, if the note as written at the British Embassy had been presented to the American Department of State, the effect would have been to catapult all Europe into the dispute. After two years of effort, at a time when success seemed utterly unattainable, the diplomacy of the Spanish ministers came near to triumph.

Before going into the details of how this final action

³ Spanish Archives. Docket 37. Telegram from the Spanish Ambassador to St. Petersburg and from the Spanish Ambassador to France, to the Spanish Minister of State, bearing the dates April 16 and 18 respectively. Both telegrams deal specifically with this point.

was frustrated, let us consider the vexed question of who took the initiative in bringing the ambassadors together, and who authored the note. To begin with, we can throw out in their entirety the statements published during the 1902 controversy (which arose as a result of a *faux pas* by Berlin), which alleged that all responsibility for what had happened rested on the shoulders of Lord Pauncefote. Pauncefote, according to the German allegation, had called the meeting, and had written the note. To check the truth of these charges, let us turn to the documents, few in number unfortunately, which concern this incident of a time that was so unsophisticated that no use was made of it, as would have happened if it had occurred ten years later, to sow dissension and jealousy among the nations of Europe. The documents are more convincing than all the inferences and deductions that might be drawn from the envenomed charges and accusations spread across the world's newspapers by the London and Berlin governments during the flare-up of 1902.

These documents are:

1. The telegram from Hoyos to his home government, to which allusion has been made, stating that Count Goluchowski had cabled the Austrian Ambassador at Washington, instructing him to "proceed with vigor, jointly with the other ambassadors," in carrying out the combined action. This telegram also touches on "mediation," "European solidarity," and the "sympathy of all the world for Spain."⁴

2. A telegram sent by the French ambassador to the United States, M. Jules Cambon, following the April 15 meeting of the ambassadors, stating that an action such as the one agreed upon, would have sensational repercussions in the United States, if signed by all the powers.⁵

3. A telegram from the Italian envoy at Washington to his government, stating that, at the meeting at the British Embassy, a note had been drafted for presentation to the Washington State Department (a copy of which he was cabling to Rome), to which all present had given their approval. The immediate cause for the

⁴ Spanish Archives. Docket 37.

⁵ French documents.

preparation of this note, he added, had been the action of the American House of Representatives in voting a Resolution authorizing armed intervention in the Cuban war for independence.⁶

4. A telegram from von Holleben to the German Minister of Foreign Relations, reading: ⁷ "The attitude of Congress causes all hope of peace to disappear. It is very remarkable that the British Ambassador today took the initiative in a fresh step by the representatives of the Great Powers. We imagine that the Queen Regent has applied to the Queen of England in this sense."

5. A note, dated April 16, from the German Ambassador to Russia, reporting that Count Mouravieff had said to him that "he fears that the whole proposal, which had its inspiration in London, had for its object driving a wedge between America and the monarchical powers of Europe [Germany and Russia]."⁸

6. A declaration by the Austro-Hungarian Emperor to a person of high station in Vienna that Spain had but two friends in Europe—Austria and France.⁹

These documents, while they contain opinions and judgments which we now know were ill founded, reflect with accuracy the situation as it existed. With respect to some points they contradict each other, as, for example, the conflicting statements they make about the source of the initiative for this last step, some alleging that it had been inspired by Austria, others that the British ambassador at Washington was responsible.

In addition to the foregoing documents, account must be taken also of the fact that the Powers, seeing the rapid approach of war, had assumed a more energetic attitude. Whereas previously the majority of them had sought to quiet Spain, they now, because of real sympathy for the weaker of the two contenders, or because of anxiety over the consequences that would follow a triumph by the United States, were inclined to focus their efforts on the American Government. The change was evident even at St. Petersburg, whence Villagonzalo was able to send

⁶ Italian documents. April 15, 1898.

⁷ "German Diplomatic Documents." Vol. II, p. 508.

⁸ "German Diplomatic Documents." 1896-1901. Vol. III, p. 511.

⁹ Spanish Archives. Docket 37. Telegram from the Spanish Ambassador at Vienna to the Spanish Foreign Minister, April 19, 1898.

to Gullon the encouraging message: ¹⁰ "I am sure this Government will join with the other Powers in protesting against the step taken by the American Congress."

From London also came good news for Spain. Rascon telegraphed: ¹¹ "Subsecretary of Foreign Affairs has said to me that the delay caused by the differences between the Senate and the House of Representatives will make it possible to bring about submission by the Cuban rebels to the Government [of Spain] before final action can be taken by President McKinley. British Government is giving very careful consideration to Cuban question."

The attitude of the British Government at this time is stated clearly in a telegram of April 16 from the Italian Ambassador at London to Rome: "The British Government is disposed to join in any effort, arranged beforehand by the Great Powers, for the preservation of peace. It also would be willing to express the hope that the President of the United States should consider, as the British Government considers, that the declaration of an armistice by Spain makes a peaceful solution possible. The London Cabinet feels, however, that it would not be prudent to express an opinion concerning the attitude of the United States, believing that such an act would not benefit the cause of peace." ¹²

Mendez Vigo, in his turn, reported from Berlin on April 16, that "there is still room for hope because the powers are working actively in the preparation of a more energetic and adequate action," than the first note, and that "Germany will, of course, agree to whatever step the others are willing to take." ¹³

These three Great Powers, Russia, Britain, and Germany, had up to this point been very reserved in their expressions, and had been careful always not to give Spain reason for believing that she could get aid from them, on some occasions going even farther, as when Bülow bluntly told Mendez Vigo that whatever course Spain should adopt, she must, in the end, submit to the will of the United States, and that it was to her ultimate

¹⁰ Spanish Archives. Docket 37. Telegram dated April 16, 1898.

¹¹ Spanish Archives. Docket 37. April 18, 1898.

¹² Italian documents.

¹³ Spanish Archives. Docket 37.

best interest to recognize this condition, and be guided by it. England, by practically withdrawing her Ambassador from Madrid, had shown almost open hostility to Spain. Russia had, from the start, held to the role of special friend of the United States in Europe.

Something new was thus in the air, caused, in all likelihood, by the imminence of war. Whatever the cause, it is apparent that, in this final period, the aim of the Powers was to prevent war by putting pressure on the Washington Government.

In studying this question, the opinion of the German Ambassador at Washington that Queen Victoria had drawn cards in the play, must be given consideration. The Ambassador used the words "we believe." This plural "we" is not assuredly a *pluralis majestatis*, but signifies that others among von Holleben's colleagues believed as he did. This belief is by no means improbable, given Queen Victoria's character and the role she played of last exemplar of the Royal Hand in English affairs of state. That, in this final moment, monarchical interests should have played an important part in events, is not to be doubted, knowing, as we do, about the activity carried on personally by Emperor Franz-Josef, and the belated adherence of Russia to the joint effort.

An American writer, Mr. Alfred L. P. Dennis, who has known personally many of the public men of his country over a period reaching back to the turn of the century, and who has during that time been a close observer and student of public affairs, following an examination of the documents in the archives of the State Department at Washington, wrote an account of the happenings of mid-April, 1898: ¹⁴

"This was on April 14, 1898, and took the form of a despatch addressed by each Ambassador to his own Foreign Office, proposing that an identical note should be addressed to the Department of State. The Austrian Ambassador put forward the suggestion, and a meeting was held, at the Austrian Embassy, of the European representatives, with the exception of the British Ambassador. He, as doyen of the diplomatic corps, had been notified, and had called a meet-

¹⁴ "Adventures in American Diplomacy, 1896-1906," Alfred L. P. Dennis, E. P. Dutton & Co., New York. 1928; p. 73.

ing; shortly the five Ambassadors crossed Connecticut Avenue from the Austrian Embassy to the British Embassy, where a lengthy conference took place. As doyen, Sir Julian Pauncefote naturally drafted a note in which there was not a word to which any American could object. There was some discussion, and amendments were suggested. Finally M. Cambon, the French Ambassador, suggested that he re-draft the proposed note. He wrote in French and made verbal changes, among them the phrase was inserted that American intervention in Cuba "*ne sera pas justifiée.*" The German translation was that such intervention was not "*gerechtfertigt.*" Such language changed the note from a friendly plea for peace to a remonstrance, based on a denial of the correctness of possible American action. Unfortunately this version of the draft was permitted to stand, for this phrase did not attract Sir Julian's attention. The note was despatched to Europe. In London, the Austrian Ambassador called on Lord Salisbury to propose joint action along these lines. He was coldly received. In Berlin also, the note which was reported by Dr. von Holleben, the German Ambassador at Washington, met with opposition; and the Kaiser made some notes on the margin of the despatch which showed his unwillingness to follow this French and Austrian lead."

Another writer, R. B. Mowat, an English professor of history, in his "Life of Lord Pauncefote,"¹⁵ gives a version of the happenings identical with that of Mr. Dennis, and absolves Lord Pauncefote of any suspicion of unfriendliness to the United States.

In February, 1902, when the controversy over the ambassadors' meeting of April, 1898, flared out, Lord Pauncefote made no effort to defend himself, nor was any adequate attempt at his defense made by the British Foreign Office. Pauncefote died several months later, on the morning of May 24, of a heart ailment from which he had long been a sufferer. "It was the opinion of his friends," writes Mowat,¹⁶ "that the attack of the German Ambassador, Dr. von Holleben, who early in 1902 accused him of an intrigue against the United States, was the shock which brought on the final illness."

The careful study I have given to this subject, a quarter of a century after the events which composed it—

¹⁵ Constable & Co., Ltd., London. 1929. Ch. XX.

¹⁶ *Idem.* 294.

a study, I may add, utterly free of bias or prejudice—based on contemporary documents never previously available to any investigator, leads me to advance the following as conclusions to which no exception can be taken:

1. The Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at Washington, after calling on and discussing with his fellow envoys a possible new joint action by the representatives of the Great Powers at Washington, requested the *doyen* of the Washington diplomatic corps, Lord Pauncefote, to call the meeting. That the envoys, with the exception of the British Ambassador, met beforehand at the Austro-Hungarian Embassy, going afterwards in a body to the British Embassy, is extremely doubtful, for the reason that it is to be supposed that the envoys would not have wished to attract attention to the meeting they were about to hold, as would have happened had they paraded in a body across Connecticut Avenue in the manner described by Mr. Dennis.

2. It is highly probable that the note prepared at the meeting in the British Embassy was the joint product of all, though it is possible that a tentative draft may have been prepared in advance by someone, and that this may have contained the ideas approved by the envoys in the course of previous exchanges of views.

3. There can be no doubt that Lord Pauncefote was completely aware of the import of the note to which he affixed his signature, for later, on soliciting of his government approval of the note, he cabled a verbatim copy of it to London. This he did without, apparently, expressing disapproval of the action, or any qualms about the terms used in the note. Had he done so, it is not to be doubted that the fact would have been mentioned by Lord Cranborne, Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, when in the House of Commons on February 14, 1902, he defended the British Government's conduct in 1898. On general grounds, and also on specific grounds connected with Lord Pauncefote's sending the note to his government, it appears that Mr. Dennis' reconstruction of the events is open to doubt.

As is always the case, the steps in an action seem easier

of execution at the time they are taken, than later when judgment is passed on them. The powers had left all initiative in the hands of their ambassadors at Washington. The fact that this was done, signifies that they were earnest in desiring a collective action which should prevent war. The ambassadors, however, were not themselves to make final decisions, but had to keep their governments informed, and get their consent before taking action. It is probable that some of the envoys approved without reservations the note as it was written, and that others, not liking the note, nevertheless gave assent to it, feeling certain that it would not be found acceptable by their governments.

The position of Pauncefote was a curious one. He had received, as has already been described, very precise instructions from the English Foreign Secretary, which instructions were pointedly repeated to him in a letter written by the Secretary the day after he had received Pauncefote's letter containing a draft of the proposed note. It seems strange that an ambassador instructed to take no step not in accord with the wishes of the government to which he was accredited, should join in the writing of a document so extremely provocative, and it seems strange, further, that he should have done absolutely nothing to prevent the arising of such a situation.

Equally remarkable is the declaration made by Holleben to his government, attributing to Queen Victoria responsibility for the action of Pauncefote. Convincing proof in substantiation of this charge is lacking, but it would be foolish to deny the possibility of its truth. The benevolent attitude of Queen Victoria towards the Queen Regent and also Victoria's sympathy for Spain in the Spanish-American dispute are revealed in the letters Victoria wrote Maria Cristina.

The explanation most favorable to the English Ambassador is that he did not wish to oppose, by himself, the joint will of the other envoys, thereby making himself seem, alone among them all, unfriendly to Spain; and that he was confident that the note's lack of restraint would insure its rejection by all the Powers.

Let us turn back now to the facts.

All the ambassadors sent to their home governments the interventionist note which all had approved. They then awaited instructions.

According to a statement by Lord Cranbourne, English Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, on February 14, 1902:¹⁷ "On the receipt of this message, Her Majesty's Government at once replied, objecting to the terms of the proposed communication as injudicious. Two days later Lord Pauncefote was informed that Her Majesty's Government had resolved to take no action."

France, after learning of England's attitude, decided to follow the same course, and refrain from further action. Other Powers, for different reasons, arrived at the same decision—all except one. In the Archives at Madrid is a telegram from Ambassador Leon y Castillo at Paris, which says that, in a conversation he had with Foreign Minister Hanotaux, he was told that all the Powers "except Austria believe it contraproductive at this time to unite in a joint note, believing that if they did so, the effect would be to excite the passions of the American people, and perhaps put an end to the struggle between the Senate, the House of Representatives, and the President."¹⁸

Just as France wished to know England's viewpoint before making her decision, so Germany wished to get that of Russia. Count Mouravieff left no room for doubt as to Russia's stand. On April 16, after stating it to the Italian Ambassador at St. Petersburg, he added that the collective note "would not dissipate the threat of war, and might have the effect of establishing a dangerous precedent; if the Great Powers should approve it, it was probable that Russia would do the same, but he believed it would be far better for the Powers to limit themselves to instructing their representatives at Washington to take, each independently of the other, such action as his government believed most opportune. With a dignified protest such as this, the Powers could disavow all respon-

¹⁷ Hansard. Fourth Series. CIII, 40.

¹⁸ Docket 37. April 18.

sibility in this dispute in which effective intervention now seems impossible." ¹⁹

On the same day, in a conversation with the German Ambassador, Count Mouravieff stated once again his attitude, maintaining that a collective note would not have the effect hoped for, but would react to the disadvantage of the Powers themselves. He said that it would be dangerous to force an intervention by Europe in an American dispute because, as a consequence, America might some day choose to intervene in European affairs, which ought never to happen. As respects Spain, the Count believed that continuance of the monarchy was the most important consideration of all:

"In his opinion the only chance of saving it will be for the Queen to place herself at the head of the movement, and to make war, whatever the cost may be, even though there may be no chance of success. Only thus can the dynasty maintain and strengthen itself. If this is not done, the Queen would undoubtedly have to give way before a revolution. To use Count Mouravieff's words: '*Si la Reine est sage, modérée, et vraiment patriotique, elle succombera et sera renvoyée. Si, par contre, elle se met à la tête du mouvement et n'est ni sage ni patriotique, elle peut sauver sa couronne; c'est cynique, mais c'est ainsi.*'" ²⁰

The Kaiser, on being shown this telegram, scribbled several comments on the margin. Alongside the passage mentioning Mouravieff's belief that intervention in America might some day provoke intervention by America in Europe, the Kaiser noted: "Not improbably." Where allusion was made to the Queen's saving her crown, and not being prudent or patriotic, the Kaiser wrote, "Then she must not hesitate for a minute." ²¹

On the margin of one of these faded old documents of the German Foreign Office there exists in the handwriting of Emperor William II a notation which because of its intrinsic interest deserves recording in these pages:

¹⁹ Italian documents. Telegram from the Italian Ambassador to Russia to the Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs. April 16, 1898.

²⁰ "German Diplomatic Documents," Vol. II, p. 511.

²¹ "German Diplomatic Documents," Vol. III, p. 511.

"England wishes to play the same game as when, last year, she confessedly promoted the Greco-Turkish war. She suggests measures to be taken by all the Powers, and seems to be taking part in them, until the belligerent has been thoroughly compromised by them. Then she retires, beats her breast like a Pharisee, declares that she has had nothing to do with it, allies herself secretly with one of the contending parties—the strongest, of course—and excites him against the Continental Powers! And all the time she is begging for commercial favours at their expense.

England won't throw in its lot with the Continental Powers, but she persists in imagining herself as an independent bit of the world between the Continent and America or Asia."

Germany, after learning the attitude of Russia, decided to have nothing further to do with any kind of action, collective or individual, stating to all who inquired that a "platonic" gesture would only damage the prestige of the Great Powers, and that any more definite action could not get the assent of all.

On the 19th of April, it became evident at last that all hope of creating a European *bloc* was gone. Germany and England officially informed the other powers that they did not believe diplomatic action at Washington to be opportune. France said that all efforts should cease until it was seen what would be the outcome of the confused political situation in the United States, where it seemed that a struggle over prerogatives was under way between Congress and the President.²² On this same day at Washington the American Congress passed a Joint Resolution proclaiming that "the people of the Island of Cuba are, and of right ought to be, free and independent." President McKinley signed the Resolution April 20, and sent an ultimatum to Spain. War followed.

Never at any time had it been possible to form a concert of Europe. Some years before the Spanish-American War, Francesco Crispi made the observation: "The con-

²² Spanish Archives. Telegram from the Spanish Ambassador in Vienna to the Spanish Prime Minister.

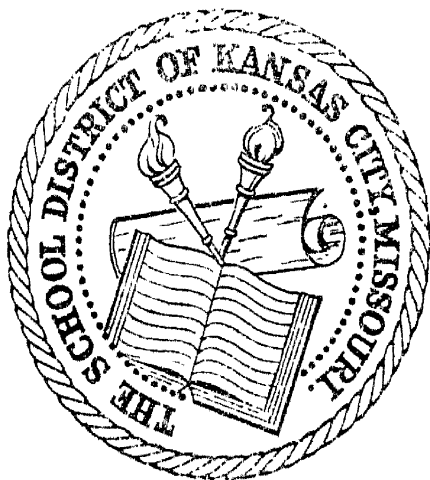
cert of Europe is a sinister farce. A new partition of Poland could be made tomorrow, and Europe would look on in silence." And in 1897, Gabriel Hanotaux, referring to the question of Crete and the many other pressing problems of the time, said, "There is nothing left of the concert of Europe."

Unity of wills, when interests conflicted so greatly with each other, was impossible to achieve. Nevertheless, America passed through an hour of peril.

Would the United States have permitted so direct a blow as the proposed European *bloc* would have been to the greatest of its continental policies, the Monroe Doctrine? What course would History have taken? Might not Spain have been triumphant? Might not Cuba be still a Spanish colony? Or would she have won her independence at all events? Impenetrable mysteries! But why fatigue the imagination with futile speculations over paradoxical conjectures as to what might have been? Let us leave to the past the things of the past, believing that events followed the course they did because of the logic that was inherent in them; believing that it had been destined that, in the new orientation about to be given to human affairs, the United States of America was to rise to rank as a great world power; believing also that it had been written in the stars that little Cuba was to win her independence.

The two attempts to intervene in America, both frustrated, demonstrate that the two Continents can live in peace, and that they can unite in action only when they show mutual respect and mutual consideration.

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